Cannock & Rugeley
CHRONICLE

Thursday, December 21, 2017 | Read by more than 71,000 people | Price when sold 70p

330 JOBS SET TO POUR INTO TOWN THANKS TO NEW FLOOD DEFENCES

The official opening of the flood defence scheme

HUNDREDS of jobs could be created, now that flood defence work in Rugeley is finished, it has been claimed.

A 350-metre long embankment has been installed over the last 12 months.

Officials from the Environment Agency, Cannock Chase Council and the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership met at Rugeley Community Centre to officially declare the work at Hagley playing fields complete.

The cost of the project has soared from an estimated cost of £2 million to £5.2m.

The scheme involved building a 1,082ft-long and 9ft-high embankment along Western Springs Road to safeguard properties. Environment Agency flood risk adviser Will Groves said it will open up new land for development, creating as many as 330 jobs.

The defences will protect 114 homes and 159 businesses from flooding when the Rising Brook overflows and the culvert at Rugeley becomes full. Mr Groves said: "This is the culmination of a lot of great work from all of the partners involved and represents collaboration at its best.

"It has been difficult at times, and we have seen the cost go up, but the impact this will have on the community is exceptional.

"As the project progressed, investigations revealed additional work was required, which could not be established at the start of the project, which isn't unusual for this type of scheme."

A plaque commemorating the completion of the work was unveiled at Monday's ceremony, although some minor work will be needed in January to tidy up the site.

The work saw Hagley playing fields closed to the public.

The Environment Agency plans to re-seed Hagley playing fields in the spring, with the site reopening to the public towards the end of next year. The exact date will depend on how well the grass grows back.

ROADS

Almost £1m to tackle potholes

ALMOST £1 million has been given to Staffordshire County Council to tackle the problem of potholes.

The investment from the Department of Transport will enable council bosses to carry out a pothole blitz across the county.

The council, led by Philip Atkins, previously announced plans to spend an extra £5m in next year's budget to tackle road defects. Drivers have been left raging by the state of the roads, while the recent snow and icy conditions have only added to the problems.

● Fund – Page 2

Parents face penalties if child turns up late 10 times

MORE SCHOOL FINES ON WAY

PARENTS face harsher punishments for taking their children out of school during term-time, following a landmark legal ruling.

Staffordshire County Council confirmed it has updated its code of conduct with new rules being implemented in the new year. Now parents face the prospect of being fined of their child turns up late 10 times or more and for any period of unauthorised absence.

The authority stated it had moved away from its previous 'common sense' approach which dealt out penalty notices for anyone taking 10 days off over a period of two half terms and 20 instances of being late for school.

However the council reiterated that whether it takes action is at the discretion of headteachers who have the final say on whether there are any 'exceptional circumstances' around absence.

The changes come after the Supreme Court set a new precedent in April ruling unanimously against Isle of Wight father Jon Platt who faced action for taking his daughter on an unauthorised holiday for seven days in 2015.

The council confirmed it had consulted with headteachers before implementing its own changes.

Education chief Councillor Philip White said: "The Supreme Court judgement is very clear that children should go to school every day, because absence and lateness affects their performance and is disruptive for the rest of the class while they're catching up.

Report by Carl Jackson

"Our guidance reflects this and ensures parents know where they stand, but it's important to remember the general position remains unchanged: head teachers have the discretion to decide whether the reason for absence is exceptional or not.

"If unauthorised by the head the school reports this to the county council which then processes the penalty notice."

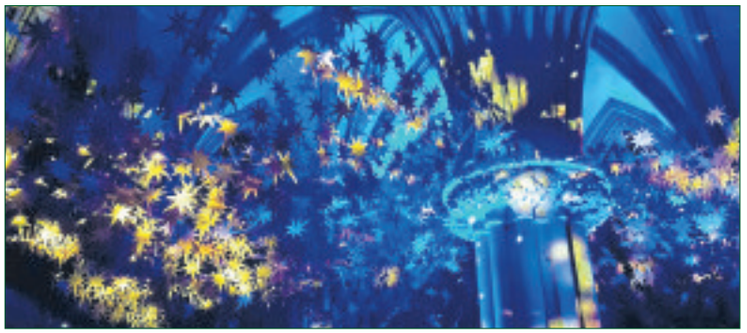
The Supreme Court judges highlighted religious holidays and sickness as being exceptional circumstances.

Schools in the county have been informing parents of the changes

The fine for taking a child out of school without permission is £60.

Figures obtained by the Freedom of Information revealed that the council has taken 184 parents to court in the last two years and collected £102,080 in fines.

Cathedral display is a star attraction



Wonderful – Lichfield Cathedral illuminated *Picture courtesy of English Cathedrals on Twitter*

IT'S the spectacular display that is leaving visitors starry-eyed at Lichfield Cathedral.

And now the historical place of worship has been lit up once again following its award-winning Christmas light and sound show last year.

This year's theme, 'Star of Wonder, Star of Light', presents the nativity story in mesmerising images and sounds across the west front of the cathedral. The projections feature in various locations around Cathedral Close, moving visitors on a mesmerising journey.

Once, inside visitors can enjoy further projections, readings at the crib, the annual Christmas Tree Festival and a star installation.

The display runs until this Saturday, with the exception of today (Thursday).

SCHOOLS

Surge ahead as test results rise by 10pc

PRIMARY school results in Staffordshire saw a marked improvement over the last year as the county surged up the national league tables.

Across the county 63 per cent of pupils achieved the Government's benchmark standard – up 10 per cent from 2016. It means Staffordshire has moved 27 places up the national table to hold a share of 55th place.

● Delight – Page 3

OPERATION

Counterfeit alcohol blitz 'a big success'

A COUNTY council operation to 'stamp out' the sale of illicit alcohol has been 'a great success', a cabinet member said.

It follows government funding awarded through the Proceeds of Crime Act.

The authority's communities leader Gill Heath: "We know it hasn't gone away and so we're asking people to look out for the signs that alcohol may be counterfeit."

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Cannock & Rugeley CHRONICLE

51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES
Open Monday to Friday 9am-1pm and 2pm-5pm
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A better way after Year of the Troll

A Christmas message from the Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Rev Dr Michael Ipgrave

SO often in the past year, grace and truth seem to have been in short supply in some parts of our public and political life.

The language we use toward one another and about one another has been bitter, vindictive and hurtful. 'Fake news' has been promoted, and fake allegations of fake news have been common. On social media in particular, the cloak of anonymity has meant that people seem to lose all restraint in attacking those with whom they disagree; 2017 has in many ways been the Year of the Troll.

But at the same time, as I have travelled around the Diocese of Lichfield, I have come across so many places where people treat one another with kindness and care. For example, in Wolverhampton alone there are fifteen 'Places of Welcome', where people can drop in to a church or community centre or mosque for a cup of tea and a friendly conversation.

In North Shropshire and beyond, a network of over sixty churches have trained to be 'dementia friendly', carefully listening to and caring for those struggling with that debilitating condition.

We have a choice. We can treat one another as a threat, abuse those who are different from us, misrepresent people's motives and spread lies about them; or we can follow a better way, reaching out to others with care, attention and service.

If that sounds simple, it is; and it is the simple message at the heart of the Christmas festival. As a Christian, I believe that God really has come to us, and still comes to us, to share our life and give us a better way of living. The Gospel of John says: 'Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ'. May you know that grace and truth this Christmas.

£1.3m fund available to fix 42,000 potholes

MORE than 40,000 potholes in Staffordshire and the Black Country are set to be filled in after the Government announced £1.3 million of new funding.

The cash pot will help repair 42,040 potholes in the region, according to the Department for Transport (DfT).

Staffordshire has been allocated the most cash – £987,868 – to fill in 18,639 potholes.

Elsewhere, Dudley will receive £149,975 for 2,773 potholes; Sandwell £139,188 to fill in 2,626 potholes; Walsall £115,952 for 2,188 potholes; and Wolverhampton 106,877 for 2,017 holes.

Worcestershire has been allotted £731,248 to fill in 13,797 potholes.

The DfT puts the average cost of each repair at £53 and a total of 90,480 will be filled in across the wider West Midlands.

Drivers will now be hoping that certain notorious spots in the region will be included in the repairs programme.

Improve

Crumbling roads which have left motorists raging include the Five Ways Island in Heath Hayes, which was finally repaired in July. Parts of the A449 Stafford Road in Wolverhampton caused concern, while fed-up residents in Station Road, Great Wyrley, resorted to putting a home-made sign at the side of the road to warn drivers.

The latest funding, part of a £200m pot for road projects, follows a £75m pothole action fund given to councils this year.

Roads Minister Jesse Norman said: "People need great roads to get about. We're investing record amounts at present to improve the condition of our roads.

"We're also looking at how new innovations can help councils keep their roads in the best condition, saving money and planning their maintenance better."

The funding announcement came days after Highways England said cars of the future could be programmed to spot potholes and transmit the information to its staff. Drones could also be used to monitor roads.

Violet's gifts for rescue centres

Violet Clark, aged eight, and Shaun Miles, headteacher at St Lukes Primary School, Cannock

A KIND-HEARTED schoolgirl collected a mountain of items to donate to two animal centres ahead of Christmas.

Violet Clark, aged eight, from Cannock, has encouraged donations of food and bedding to be handed over to the Rosedene Animal Rescue Centre in Rushall near Walsall and CAARS Animal Rescue Centre in Essington. Her mother Nicola said she had to turn down Violet's idea of buying a new dog, but urged her daughter to put her efforts into supporting animals in time for the festive period.

Nicola, 42, said: "I told her 'Don't moan about it – do something about it'. She started to collect donations, and I said we can take them over for Christmas.

"She plucked up the courage to ask her headteacher, and he put it in the school newsletter, and it's gone from there.

"I'm so proud of her, she's a really kind-hearted girl – she's just one of those children.

"We got a really good response from everyone connected with the school, and Violet has also been out asking her neighbours and getting her dad to ask people at his work."

Dogs sniff out 33,000 contraband cigarettes

THOUSANDS of illicit cigarettes and a quantity of hand rolling tobacco have been seized from Staffordshire shops during a December operation.

Staffordshire County Council trading standards officers, aided by sniffer dogs, raided shops in Rugeley, Tamworth and Burton in recent weeks. The premises were targeted as part of an intelligence-led operation to tackle illicit tobacco sales.

Sniffer dog Yoyo

They found 33,000 cigarettes, believed to be counterfeit or illegal, over 8kg of illegal hand rolling tobacco, 13 litres of suspected non-duty paid vodka and £1,000 in cash.

It is the latest in a series of county-wide visits by the trading standards team. Trading standards officers, who were supported by Staffordshire Police, are now considering further enforcement action. Cigarettes uncovered are thought to have been illegally imported and previously supplied at the shops.

The tobacco was often hidden in cavity walls and ceilings.

Stuart Phillips, from BWY Canine Ltd which provided some of the dogs, said: "Tobacco detection dogs are the most accurate, reliable and quickest way of locating hidden illegal tobacco products."

Trailer and tools stolen on Chase

CANNOCK Chase rangers were left devastated after trailers and tools used to maintain the beauty spot were stolen.

The theft happened near the visitor centre at Marquis Drive between 5pm on Sunday, December 10 and 8am the following day. The venue is run by Staffordshire County Council.

Economic growth boss Councillor Mark Winnington said: "We are hugely disappointed that a number of trailers and power tools have been stolen.

"Our countryside teams and volunteers use the tools to keep the countryside sites and rights and way maintained for people to enjoy, and this will have an impact on their ability to do this. I would ask anyone that has information about the matter or who may have seen something to get in touch with the police."

Caller in repairs con

A BOGUS caller purporting to be from a housing association conned his way into a home in The Crescent, Burntwood, saying he was carrying out a repair. The incident happened at 7.45am on Saturday. After being allowed to enter he said he was going to his van but did not return. Nothing was reported stolen.

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COUNTY NEWS

Severn Trent in bogus calls alert

SEVERN Trent is warning its customers to be extra vigilant following reports of bogus phone callers claiming to be from the company threatening to cut off supplies.

Customers have received calls from a person who then threatened to stop water the following morning because of an unpaid bill. Elaine Taylor, of Severn Trent, said: "We often hear about people trying to access homes by saying they're from 'the water board' but this kind of phone call is unusual and obviously worrying."

For more information, go to stwater.co.uk/doorstep-password or call 08457 500 500.

City event invite to disease survivors

SURVIVORS of meningitis are being invited to a charity day in March.

Meningitis Now is holding the event in Birmingham, but is inviting people from across the West Midlands.

It is designed to give people the opportunity to learn more about the different aspects of recovery and the after-effects of the disease, and provide practical skills and information.

The event will take place at Austin Court in Cambridge Street, Birmingham, on March 12.

Log on to www.meningitisnow.org/how-we-help/ways-we-can-help-you/about-our-services/support-events/rebuilding-futures-day-2018

245 guns handed in over two weeks

AN AK-47, a Tommy Gun and shotguns – just some of the 245 weapons handed in to West Midlands police during a two-week firearms amnesty.

More than 100 working firearms including rifles, shotguns, revolvers and handguns were surrendered during the campaign. Silencers, starting pistols, and two deactivated machine guns were also taken to police stations. Det Insp Rod Rose said: "For everybody who decided to hand in a weapon may I say thank you."

Survey into £282m motorway scheme

PUBLIC consultations on designs for a new £282 million junction on the M42 near Birmingham will launch in the new year.

A new 2.4km dual carriageway link road will be created as part of a project to improve traffic flows at an important junction for the millions of people who travel to Birmingham International Airport every year as well as nearby places such as the NEC.

Centre tells customers about campaign

Steve Edis, Roy Lees and Dave Sims at Walsall Training Centre with donations

STAFF have been digging deep to help our Feed a Family This Christmas campaign.

Walsall Training Centre, which provides courses and assessments for gas, plumbing, electrical or construction trade sectors is the latest business to back the appeal.

They have collected dozens of items of food as well toiletries, clothing and toys, which will go to help those in need during the festive period.

Steve Edis, director of the training centre, said he was delighted to support the campaign.

"We try to support local food banks at this time of year, as we know there are a lot of families struggling at Christmas," he said.

Readers have donated festive food such as mince pies, chocolates and Christmas puddings, as well as basics including canned goods, long-life milk, fruit juice, pasta and rice. Non-food items such as toiletries, baby supplies, new socks and small presents have also come flooding in.

Since the campaign launched on November 4, we've had support from an array of organisations and schools across the region.

PTP Training has backed the appeal along with Healthwatch Wolverhampton, while Saddlers Shopping Centre in Walsall has come on board to collect donations.

Your generosity sees donations flooding in

YOUR incredible generosity in donating food to our Feed A Family This Christmas appeal will have a tangible effect for those in need across the Black Country.

Once again, thousands of items have flooded in to ensure people who, for whatever reason, rely on a food bank for a meal at Christmas time will not go without.

Our drop off points have been kept very busy during the four-week campaign thanks to the amazing kindness of you, our readers, and the wider community.

To highlight just how important food banks and keeping them stocked up can be, the Express & Star visited The Good Shepherd Ministry at Darlington Street Methodist Church in Wolverhampton to speak with people who have been given a lifeline by the volunteers who put themselves out to ensure others don't go without.

Helen Holloway, admin manager at the Good Shepherd, said: "The problem isn't going away and unfortunately food banks are more vital than ever."

The Good Shepherd Ministry also offers those who show the most enthusiasm for taking any opportunity they can get a place on their Service Volunteer Programme.

One such person who has taken on this responsibility is Heriberto Garcia Vazquez, 52, who travels via bus from Birmingham every day to help out. He started out as a food bank service user but is now a major part of the operation. He said: "These guys are like my family and I love it, I don't mind what they need me to do I will do it."

Maxine Price and Stephen Dale, who are engaged and live in Merridale, were both given a meal by volunteers during the Express & Star's visit to the Good Shepherd Ministry and had nothing but praise.

Maxine said: "The volunteers here are lovely, they are really here for people and make a difference.They have helped us in so many ways recently, not just with meals but with assistance that is crucial to our day to day lives."

Volunteer Heriberto Garcia Vazquez in the kitchen

Stephen Dale and Maxine Price at the ministry

Good Shepherd admin manager Helen Holloway

Kind pupils hand over their party food

Pupils from Westcroft School at the E&S

SCHOOLCHILDREN have shown their caring nature by donating food left over from their Christmas party to our Feed A Family appeal.

Youngsters at Westcroft School in Wolverhampton were given the choice of keeping it for a later date or handing it over to help those less fortunate – they all voted to donate them. They have also been busy collecting hundreds of other donations of food, toiletries and toys, which they then delivered to the Express & Star head office.

These are being passed on to food banks and other good causes across the Black Country and Staffordshire.

Older pupils at the school, for students with complex learning needs, have been taught about some of the challenges people face in their lives in their citizenship and independent living skills lessons.

Judge tells cheat she must pay back £81k

A MOTHER-OF-FOUR who went snorkelling in the tropics while illegally pocketing £81,000 in disability benefits has been told: "You must repay the lot."

Linda Hoey went to the Maldives and Egypt, and holiday photos revealed the lie she had been living for 15 years while claiming to be barely able to walk.

Linda Hoey

The racket saw her collect £65,244 of disability living allowances by exaggerating the effects of arthritis and other complaints.

This allowed her to receive an exemption pass under false pretences and rack up £16,588 worth of free travel on the M6 Toll as she travelled to work at PartsWorld in Orbital Way, Cannock.

At a proceeds of crime hearing at Stafford Crown Court, Hoey, aged 38, was ordered to repay £81,812.05. She must also pay £1,000 costs.

Mr Jason Pegg, prosecuting, told the hearing that Hoey had total assets of £185,000 comprising mainly of the family's house and a narrowboat.

Mrs Marion Smullen, mitigating, said Hoey's current income was £109.65 per week and that her husband's small business had completely folded due to him becoming her carer and the pressures of the case.

Judge Johnathan Gosling told Hoey, of Talland Avenue, Tamworth, she has three months to pay up or serve three years in jail in default.

Young farmers' event raises £3k

THOUSANDS of pounds was raised during a Christmas shopping evening.

It was the fifth such annual event held by Staffordshire Young Farmers Clubs (YFC) and raised a total of £3,328 including match funding from Barclays. More than 300 people attended to support YFC for one of their biggest fundraising events for the year and all the money will go towards their running costs.

Sixty five stalls filled the Ingestre Suite at the County Showground in Stafford to sell local produce.

YFC county chairman Richard Mottershead said: "Once again this year, our christmas shopping evening has been a great success. It is a great fundraising evening, and we appreciate all the support from the stalls and visitors on the evening."

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'Plan ahead' plea over changes to trains

RAIL passengers are being urged to plan journeys in advance and allow extra time during the festive period while engineering work takes place.

Certain services in and out of Birmingham New Street will be affected by track and signalling upgrades.

This will affect services between Birmingham and Rugeley Trent Valley after 9.30pm on December 23. Trains between New Street and Wolverhampton, and on the Cross City line, will be affected between December 27 and January 2.

Richard Dugdale, Network Rail's senior scheme sponsor for the work, said: "Half the normal number of people travel by train at Christmas and New Year so we are seizing the opportunity to complete a huge amount of signalling and track upgrades.

"That way we cause the least amount of disruption to the fewest number of people."

The £246 million scheme is part of a wider £600m-plus programme to upgrade signalling throughout the West Midlands including Bromsgrove, Wolverhampton, Walsall, Coventry and on the route between Stourbridge and Banbury via Birmingham Snow Hill.

Passengers can plan their Christmas travel at www.nationalrail.co.uk/christmas

For specific information about Birmingham New Street changes, follow @NetworkRailBHM

MP takes up fears over railway work

AN MP has joined upset residents in speaking out against 17ft-high stanchions along the Chase Line.

Residents in Cheslyn Hay and Great Wyrley are unhappy with them because of the negative effect they fear it will have on property prices as well as their view. The stanchions have been put up along the railway between Rugeley Trent Valley and Walsall as part of the electrification upgrade.

Gavin Williamson, MP for South Staffordshire, said: "I have been contacted by a number of residents who have homes backing on to the track.

" I have contacted both Network Rail and the Secretary of State for Transport to urge them to address this issue and to look at the concerns of the residents who are affected."

24-hour bus ticket

ARRIVA has launched a scheme to encourage passengers to catch a bus home after a night out and use a 24-hour return ticket to get them safely to work the following morning. Go to www.arrivabus.co.uk/24hourticket

Homes on works site a step closer

An artist's impression of the development

PLANS for 116 homes on the site of a former valve works in Cannock have been submitted.

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has now lodged an application with Cannock Chase Council to develop the old Parker Hannifin site in Walkmill Lane.

The government authority initially unveiled the proposals in October.

Previously the land was targeted for a 93-home development submitted by Schroder Property but the council rejected the proposal because the firm claimed it was too expensive to deliver any affordable housing. The HCA vowed it could allocate up to 23 properties in its scheme.

The latest plans include the full policy provision of 20 per cent affordable housing, associated infrastructure and public open space. The site was home to Parker Hannifin until 2000 and has remained vacant since.

Karl Tupling, the Homes and Communities Agency's general manager in the Midlands, said: "The HCA is really pleased to be helping bring this local site back into use to provide 116 new homes and help local people in Cannock to have access to a home of their own." Property consultancy Cushman & Wakefield is supporting the HCA in the planning process.

Claire Biddle from its planning and development team said: "The proposals will visually and physically improve this brownfield site, providing green space and an attractive frontage along Walkmill Lane.

"The wider area is becoming more residential in character, and the proposed mixture of housing and apartments will contribute to this growing neighbourhood."

Motorists must pay for parking at Chasewater

PARKING charges will be introduced at Chasewater next month, 12 months after the idea was first announced.

Staffordshire County Council's economic growth chief Councillor Mark Winnington approved the move under 'delegated powers'.

The fees will be implemented at the site from January 1 with an hour's parking costing £1 or £3 a day. Annual passes are available for £36.

The authority had put up signs last December informing visitors they would have to pay to park their cars from the start of 2017 – but then backed down from the idea.

Councillor Winnington said: "Visitor numbers to our country parks have increased hugely in recent years, which is great news.

"However, we have to invest in maintaining and managing these sites for the enjoyment of everyone.

Budget

"We already charge at some of our nearby car parks, including Marquis Drive and Milford Common on Cannock Chase, and this is part of our approach to making sure we can properly manage Staffordshire's countryside estate for years to come." The council's cabinet were discussing the issue of parking at other high-profile sites yesterday (Wednesday).

It is the latest part of the council's countryside estates review, which aims to cut £700,000 from its allocated £1.5 million annual budget.

The project is now moving towards its second phase, with the first phase inviting expressions of interest from organisations looking to manage certain visitor attractions. The next part of the work will be to draw up a list of potential savings and ways of increasing income. One option includes exploring the 'commercial potential' of the innovation centre at Chasewater as well as finding ways to make more money from the visitor centre at Marquis Drive.

Councillor Gill Heath, communities boss, said: "The county council recognises its country parks and open spaces are one of the jewels in Staffordshire's crown."

Molly lets fundraising go to her head

Molly May at Luxe Hairdressing in Great Wyrley after donated 30in of hair to charity

A YOUNG girl from Great Wyrley raised hundreds of pounds and donated 30in of hair to charity.

Molly May, aged 11, heard about the Little Princess Trust, a charity that provides wigs for young cancer patients, a year ago.

She had been growing her hair ever since. Her hair grew to 30in before she had it cut off at Luxe Hairdressing in Great Wyrley to be made into a wig for cancer patients or those suffering conditions such as alopecia. She also raised £525 for the charity through sponsorship forms.

Her mother, Susan McMurray, 43, said: "I think she is outstanding. She is just incredible and, because at the time she decided she wanted to do it she was only 10-years-old, I am very proud of her. Her hair grew down to the middle of her back, and she was so happy to have raised so much money for charity.

"She has done charity work before, like donating to food banks, but nothing like this before. She is very selfless."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Food poisoning alert on dinners

CANNOCK Chase Council is supporting the Food Standards Agency's campaign offering guidance on how to safely prepare turkey at home.

It includes taking sufficient bags when shopping so that raw and ready-to-eat foods can be separated to avoid cross-contamination.

And washing raw turkey simply splashes germs on to hands, clothes and worktops, the agency warns.

Councillor Muriel Davis, the council's lead on health and wellbeing, said: "Raw and undercooked turkey can cause food poisoning.

"This is why we are supporting the Food Standards Agency campaign."

Warning on thefts from garden sheds

STAFFORDSHIRE Police have issued a reminder to keep sheds and outbuildings safe from crime this winter.

The force says there tends to be an increase in thefts from sheds and outbuildings at this time of year, and wants people to take the necessary steps to protect them.

Advice from the force includes installing shed alarms and quality padlocks, as well as using special marking kits for valuable items.

A force spokesman said: "Any suspicious vehicles or persons seen in the area, please make us aware."

Firm gets baking in aid of hospice

THE 135-strong workforce at Cannock company Advanta took part in a bake-off competition for charity.

The event was part of a festive fundraising campaign for Katharine House Hospice and it took the total raised by the aluminium packaging manufacturer so far to £283.

Becky Summerfield and Jackie Mathews were joint first in the morning shift section. Other winners were Jacqui Hawkins (office), and A Blagoya (afternoon shift) and Steve Jones (night shift). Visit justgiving.com/fundraising/advantapackaging

Angling deal is up for grabs at pool

LICHFIELD District Council is inviting fishing clubs to apply for a rental agreement for the sole use of fishing at Stowe Pool.

The agreement can be up to five years and would see a fishing club deliver angling opportunities for local people.

The application pack is at www.lichfieldhistoricparks.co.uk/fishing

The deadline to apply is midday on Monday, January 29.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Banks – not wine bars but reason to whine on

A FEW years ago, NatWest bank had an advertising slogan which was, if nothing else, repetitive.

It seemed that every time you switched the TV on there was some customer groaning "my bank's now a trendy wine bar." The message was clear. Unlike other banks, NatWest realised that to serve customers you actually had to have a network of branches they can go to.

How times have changed. NatWest has just announced the closure of 197 branches, saying that more people are turning to internet banking, with the number of people calling into branches falling by 40 per cent since 2014. Maybe so, but I guess if you keep closing branches – and cutting hours – then you are bound to see fewer people calling into them.

The company suggests that people may prefer to use a "banking app" instead. Now I don't really know what a banking app is, but I'm fairly certain I wouldn't prefer to use it. What happens if somebody nicks your dog and bone? How many passwords are we expected to remember?

I can see why banks want more people to move online. The latest closure programme will see staff numbers cut by 680, and think of all the money saved on rent, rates and utility bills. But what's in it for the customer? The very thought of having my bank account at the mercy of the hackers brings me out in a cold sweat. The idea that I would have my life savings in an account protected only by a password I will struggle to remember seems utterly ridiculous, even if the interest rate is half a per cent higher.

Of course, given the state of the licensed trade, it is probably unlikely that any of the latest NatWest branches will become trendy wine bars.

Perhaps there should be a new advertising campaign. "My bank's boarded up and covered in graffiti."

❐❐❐

IN case you hadn't noticed we had a bit of snow last week. I know it took a few people by surprise, but these things tend to happen in December.

Now I don't want to go all Four Yorkshiremen on you, but I live on the top of a hill and drove 25 miles to work through what was supposed to be the coldest place in the country. It really isn't that hard; just pack a shovel, broom, and extra food, set out a bit earlier and take a different route. Anyone can do it.

It's funny how one of the things which seems to bring out the snowflakes is, well, a few snowflakes.

Technical crooks don't know how to use a hacksaw

Prince Edward – chose strange outfit for a formal photograph at his home

Pope Francis wants to drop 'lead us not into temptation' from the Lord's Prayer

Michael Gove – says leaving the EU might improve animal-welfare standards

Unlocking the way to deter car thieves

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

TRAVELLING in a mate's smart new car the other day, I noticed a steering-wheel lock on the back seat. Remember those? There was a time, in the days when car locks were dead easy to pick, when a bright yellow disc bolted to your steering wheel was a deterrent. Next, for a few years, car locks became really hard to crack; then they got too keylessly hi-tech for their own good. Today, thanks to the magic of the microchip, any scally with the right electronic gizmo can drive off any limo he chooses. Hence the rebirth of the humble steering-wheel lock, the ultimate deterrent against crooks who are experts on computer programming but don't know how to use a hacksaw.

ON a visit to Battersea Dogs and Cats Home, Environment Secretary Michael Gove says leaving the EU might allow Britain to impose higher animal-welfare standards and combat puppy smuggling. Why was this not mentioned during the referendum campaign? Why were our heartstrings not tugged by the ultimate campaign slogan? Vote Brexit - or the puppies get it.

POPE Francis wants to drop "lead us not into temptation" from the Lord's Prayer, on the grounds that God does not lead humans to sin. His Holiness suggests replacing it with "do not let us fall into temptation," explaining: "It's Satan who leads us into temptation, that's his department."

HANG on a moment. The only reason that Satan can tempt humans is that the Almighty made us so very temptable (remember that unfortunate business with the apple and serpent?). Most of the Old Testament is about God creating sinners and then punishing them for sinning. It's a bit daft which may explain why the priesthood kept the Bible in Latin for so many centuries and had a plentiful supply of firewood to deal with any peasant heard uttering the words: "It's a bit daft."

KIDS at a primary school in Telford who forgot their PE kit were invited to take part wearing their underpants. At least one parent complained but the authorities insisted that all the pupils enjoyed the lesson. I bet. I recall with a shudder being sent into the school swimming bath naked, aged 12, having carelessly left my trunks at home. Everyone enjoyed that, too. Except me. I really must sort out that claim for post-traumatic stress.

HE is 53 and presumably allowed to choose his own clothes. So whatever possessed Prince Edward to pose for a formal photograph at his home, Bagshot Park, wearing a bow tie, velvet smoking jacket, tartan trousers and monogrammed slippers? Most odd.

CLASSY response to my item on the snowflake generation from a reader who points out: "I don't object to the term Snowflake. We're seeing at the moment what they can do when they get together, aren't we?" At the time he wrote, a few billion snowflakes flexed their muscles and paralysed the nation. But then they very quickly got overheated and ran away.

OUR changing language. According to the BBC website: "The snow showers have sweeped across into London." Meanwhile, Mail Online reports someone being 'murdered to death'.

WE are still a long way from being a fully online society. The Office for National Statistics reckons nearly half of single pensioners have no internet access. And it's a fair guess that many of these older folks are claiming benefits, or at least trying to. Any Answers (Radio 4) took a call from a woman who, having no internet access in her home, had to use a computer at her local library to apply for benefit. When her passport and driving licence were not accepted for identification purposes, the system advised her to download an app to her smartphone. Seriously. That was my angriest moment of the week and I dare say some of you shared it.

MY sympathy for starving songbirds evaporated in the first 48 hours of Ye Great Freeze. If the little idiots would only eat, instead of posing and posturing at each other, they would fare a lot better. Robins bully blackbirds who bully tits who bully wagtails who waste hundreds of calories wagging, as the name suggests, their tails. So much wasted energy, so little brainpower.

TALKING POINT

Payouts are taking cash from those in real need

IT'S good to know that, while the country awaits the outcome of Brexit negotiations, there are still some inevitabilities during uncertain times.

We can all be sure of death, taxes and Australia winning the Ashes. Now, it seems unwanted phone calls are a constant. We have all had them. People trying to sell you something, claims for PPI, better energy deals. But in this day an age of cost-cutting and austerity, it seems there is a new scourge on society, spurious accident claims.

'Have You Had An Accident At Work?' the helpline commercial yells. "Our records tell me you've had an accident recently," says the voice on the phone.

And they know that how, exactly? Of course the standard response would be something along the lines of: "No, but you will have one if you keep calling." Or throw them completely by claiming your head fell off, like comedian Rob Beckett.

Seriously, though, it seems the compensation craze is the latest fad. Often we hear of members of the public making spurious claims for minor incidents – or in some cases no accident at all – just to cash in. More astonishingly, supposedly cash-strapped authorities are paying out.

Croydon Council, for example, paid out nearly £6 million in personal injury claims over the last three years. These, staggeringly included £43,000 to a child who needed surgery to remove a splinter after sitting on a playground bench.

There was an £81,000 to a claimant who broke a leg by jumping over the gate at a locked car park and another payout of £181,000 to someone who tripped on a pavement damaged during works. And let's not forget the £18,000 for the schoolboy hit by a javelin during a PE lesson.

A police officer even received £12,000 after being bitten by a flea, while in August a woman was 'hit' by a taxi in an alleged attempt to cash in. The taxi firm's boss admitted that without the dashcam footage, they would not have been protected against a potential payout.

John O'Connell, of the TaxPayers' Alliance, said the 'compensation culture' diverted cash from essential services such as social care and road maintenance.

Too right. With the NHS in dire straits, care homes closing and important transport links axed, one can see his point. But these claimants serve to line their own pockets without a thought for what taxpayers' money is spent on. We all know how The Boy Who Cried 'Wolf' ends. We can only hope for a similar outcome when these 'injured parties' really are hurt.

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Prison officer 'lied to avoid paying her ex'

4,000 enjoy town's festival

Burntwood Town Council is celebrating the success of the town's Christmas Festival after about 4,000 people turned out for the event. The council took the opportunity to present the first awards to various organisations from the We Love Burntwood Fund. Organisations can apply for funding from The Community Foundation for Staffordshire. "The event is growing in popularity and it is hoped that this festival will continue to grow," a council spokesman said.

A 'DISHONEST' ex-prison officer tried to wriggle out of handing her ex-partner his rightful share of the house where they lived, a judge decided.

Louise Jervis even resorted to 'fabricating' copies of a builder's invoices to support her claim that the four-bedroom house in Hednesford was hers alone.

But a tribunal judge has now condemned her as a 'dishonest' witness and upheld Richard Whitehouse's claim to a stake in the property.

Both of them were prison officers when they got together in 2001.

In 2009 Mr Whitehouse put £25,000 towards acquiring the house in Linwood Drive.

The tribunal was told that they split up in 2015.

Share

He said the money was an investment and a loan but Miss Jervis insisted that he agreed at the time that it was 'a gift'.

The property was in Miss Jervis's sole name but Mr Whitehouse said it was always understood that he would have a share.

Living together in the house 'as man and wife', he said he contributed to the mortgage and other expenses.

The DIY enthusiast told the judge he put his money into improving and maintaining the property.

Copies of a builder's invoices that Miss Jervis put forward as evidence that he had not improved the property were 'not genuine', Judge Dray ruled.

The judge, during the hearing in London, said: "I am satisfied that they have been fabricated by Miss Jervis.

"All in all, I consider that Miss Jervis gave dishonest evidence."

The precise share due to Mr Whitehouse will be assessed at a further hearing.

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Normal collection days until Friday 22 December 2017

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Monday 1 January 2018	Tuesday 2 January 2018
Tuesday 2 January 2018	Wednesday 3 January 2018
Wednesday 3 January 2018	Thursday 4 January 2018
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Friday 5th January 2018	Saturday 6th January 2018

Normal collection days will recommence Monday 8 January 2018

For more information tel 01543 462621 or visit www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/wasteservices

Search for 'Cannock Chase Life' @CannockChaseDC www.youtube.com/CannockChaseDC

Farewell to a favourite character

MARGARET 'Missy' Bates passed away peacefully on November 25.

She was well-known and respected as head of the Red House School nursery unit in Aldridge.

She was noted for her lovely singing voice, which she still had even at 90, both as a lead singer and as part of the Walsall Gilbert and Sullivan group, with wonderful productions over many years.

A chance meeting at the Tuesday coffee morning at the Methodist church in Aldridge was the start of our long relationship.

For over 20 years bringing joy, peace, contentment and love into both our lives, a shared happiness, she will always remain part of me.

RAY HAMMOND
Aldridge

Could pub become a tourist attraction?

I WAS very pleased to read about and offer my congratulations on Marston's achieving £1 billion profit and sales figures and hope that the expansion continues (Chronicle, December 7).

It brings to mind the Four Crosses Inn on the A5 at Hatherton.

It was, with the adjacent farm, part of Lord Hatherton's estate which had to be sold to meet death duties in the 1950s. It was highly successful, being run by Harry Tomlinson, my late father-in-law, for many years.

When he retired, it was taken on by Mr and Mrs Hilton, and its success and popularity were maintained.

Incidentally, after the Hiltons, the pub had a succession of managers who could not maintain the trade, causing Banks's to sell it off. I believe there were planning problems to improve it as it is a listed building.

It is wishful thinking on my part that Marston's might consider repurchasing it for development as a historical tourist attraction as an old coaching inn with four-poster beds. It would be unique in the Midlands.

EDWARD TURVEY
Penkridge

Wrong location for new outlet village

CANNOCK Chase Council are delighted at securing the Mill Green designer outlet village which will open in 2020.

The roads around Mill Green will just not take the extra traffic. Whenever there is a problem around the Orbital island area (no matter how small), the roads just become gridlocked as it is. It is too close to the town, these outlets are usually out of town.

McArthurGlen missed a much better location just a few miles up the road – the old power station site at Rugeley.

So there's something to look forward to for the people of Cannock – traffic jam misery! Watch this space, Cannock Chase Council.

J H HAMMOND
Cheslyn Hay

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Cannock & Rugeley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL
cannock.chron@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Code of Practice:
Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adhere to the Editors' Code of Practice, which can be seen at www.ipso.co.uk. If you are unhappy with the accuracy of a story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

We were all abandoned in the snow

I STRONGLY disagree with Paige Davies regarding the performance of the highways department in keeping the roads functioning ("Thoughtless truckers gave us hill to climb", December 14).

Here at Pye Green we feel like we should be renamed Ice Station Zebra as we were abandoned – no buses for three days and little or no gritting.

Years ago you never heard of the buses being cancelled as they would follow in the path of well-gritted bus routes.

I feel so sorry for the old and infirm as the pathways were diabolical.

Every time I went out on foot I felt like Captain Oates . . . I may be some time!

PAUL DRURY
Hednesford

This development is a step too far

THE monster raises its ugly head again. Norton Canes probably already exceeds its quota percentage for local housing requirement, and yet our representatives will likely agree to at least 450 new houses being built on land south of the village that will potentially bring another two thousand people into the village (Chronicle, December 14).

It appears this is being done without a single thought for additional infrastructure to cope with this or, more importantly, the health of the new residents exposed to air pollution and constant noise, living alongside a six-lane motorway and a major trunk road where there are already concerns regarding the levels of air pollution.

It should be clear to anyone that this development is a step too far and planning officers should reject this plan.

TOM ROBBINS
Norton Canes

Where is the fairness?

WHY is it we give millions of pounds abroad, and when it comes to people living in poverty in England, like young families trying to feed their children on a tight budget, they have to use the food banks? What a disgrace this country is, with pensioners who can't afford to keep the heating on or feed themselves, while we have to rehome all the people who come over here and make sure they are provided for.

TERESA
Hednesford

‘Not on our shopping list’

“WE will not be buying shopping centres” – those are the words of Staffordshire County Council’s leader in response to news of financial black holes reaching up to £44 million in the next five years.

The council is in the process of drawing up its 2018-19 budget, while looking ahead to how it might be able to balance the books between now and 2022-23.

Next year, it will have to find £12m, although leader Philip Atkins said that if required, it could be taken from reserves.

But in the following years the gap increases to £35.7m in 2019-20, £43.7m in 2020-21, £37.1m in 2021-22 and £44.4m in 2022-23.

Among a list of options to find the money the council has stated it will consider making ‘investments in property’, particularly buildings which would earn a ‘return’, but Councillor Atkins rejected the idea of any lucrative purchases.

He said: “We have noticed one or two councils in Staffordshire buying shopping centres, but we will not be doing that.”

Council tax ‘to rise for the next 5 years’

STAFFORDSHIRE County Council is facing a £12 million black hole next year, with residents set to see their council tax increase for the next five years. Bosses are also considering introducing fines for people who drive in bus lanes as one option to generate income.

They are also looking at cutting spending on road safety education by £150,000. It comes as the council prepares its budget for 2018-19. Leader Philip Atkins has said the biggest pressure the authority faces is the increasing cost of adult and child social care, which accounts for more than half of the budget.

The council is preparing to spend a record £310m next year in that area alone.

Residents have been warned that they should prepare themselves for the authority’s portion of council tax to increase by 4.95 per cent from April, three per cent of that being ring-fenced for social care.

It means an increase of just over £1 a week on bills for a Band D property. But a longer term financial plan suggests increases ranging from 1.95 per cent to 3.95 per cent up until 2022-23.

Councillor Mike Sutherland, cabinet member for finance, said: “While nobody wants to pay more in taxes, we want to be honest with people about the serious uphill financial challenges we face. Each year the funding for care continues to rise.”

● Staffordshire’s Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Ellis wants to increase the force’s portion of council tax by more than two per cent.

He has launched a consultation on the move which he said would help ‘maintain funding for policing’.

The Government currently caps increases at just under two per cent but the PCC is hoping the restriction is scrapped.

Investment creates 13,000 jobs in county

The i54 site is one of a number of successful schemes

THOUSANDS of jobs will be created in Staffordshire from nearly £400 million worth of business investments.

A new report has revealed that since 2014, projects focused on boosting the economy that have been completed, are under construction or are being planned, are worth a total of £383m, leading to the creation of 13,000 jobs.

It is a result of the county council’s growth programme, which invested £56m. For every £1 the authority invests, an additional £15 is levered in from the private sector or from the Government. Successful development schemes included the i54 site and Kingswood Lakeside in Cannock.

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The extensive showroom offers over 50 fireplaces in home settings

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There is a massive choice of designs and great name manufacturers to choose from.

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Stylish

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Latest peek at designer outlet village

The latest artist's impression of the Mill Green designer outlet village

THIS is the latest glimpse of a new designer outlet village which a council chief hopes will become a 'major tourist destination'.

Cannock Chase Council leader George Adamson has said the new village will be a 'major boost' for the area.

The new artist's impression of Mill Green has been released as McArthurGlen, the developers behind Wolverhampton's Westside leisure scheme, as it unveiled a £160 million deal to build and run the outlet village. The shopping complex is expected to create more than 1,000 jobs when it opens in 2020.

Work on the site, which already has planning permission from Cannock Chase Council, is due to start in the early part of next year.

Councillor Adamson said: "The council has supported the outlet village scheme over many years, and I am pleased that it is now coming to fruition.

"It will become a major tourist destination and is a major boost for Cannock Chase."

Insurance dodgers blitz

POLICE in Staffordshire and the West Midlands are working together to reduce the number of uninsured vehicles in the region.

The two forces estimated that there are 99,000 vehicles which are not insured by the owners.

Using advanced technology, officers are targeting those vehicles that have been seen without a valid insurance policy attached to them. A warning letter is then sent to the registered keeper.

Hampshire Constabulary and Thames Valley Police have already successfully trialled this approach, contacting 2,500 keepers of uninsured vehicles and seeing 80 per cent of them reinsure their vehicle as a result. The remaining 20 per cent were then targeted by the forces' roads policing units, with 113 vehicles then being seized.

So far in Staffordshire and the West Midlands, police have contacted 225 registered keepers and 69 per cent have already reinsured. Another 213 registered keepers have been contacted, giving them two weeks to respond before additional action is taken.

Supt Dean Hatton, head of the Central Motorway Policing Group, said: "Those who deliberately avoid insuring their vehicles, or those who ignore the letters, will remain subject to enforcement and prosecution for the offence."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Beer festival in return to venue

LICHFIELD Arts' Winter Beer Festival will return to the city's Guildhall on January 19 and 20.

More than 30 beers and ciders have been ordered, and there will be live music on both evenings.

Admission on the door is £2 before 6pm and £3 after 6pm.

Large parties are advised to call 01543 262223 to reserve tickets.

Ramblers group to take a break

CHASE Ramblers have announced that there will be no walk on Sunday, Christmas Eve.

"We wish everyone a merry Christmas and hope to see you on New Year's Eve," spokesman John Adkins said. New walkers are welcome to join future outings. For further information, call Barry on 01543 684254.

Give toy box a detox for charity

PARENTS in Staffordshire are being urged to 'detox their toy box' in the last-minute run-up to Christmas and donate toys and games to charity.

All profits raised from the sale of toys at Barnardo's shops in the county will be used to help vulnerable children, young people and families supported by the charity.

£300 donated to YMCA

RUGELEY YMCA has been presented with a donation of £300 from the Labour Party. Next year, the Rugeley branch of the party will be collecting items and raising funds in aid of the town's food bank.

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Sunday 24th December CLOSED
Christmas Day- CLOSED
Boxing Day 10.30am-4.30pm
Wednesday 27th December 9am-6pm
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We'll fight for county over HS2 – council

STAFFORDSHIRE County Council has pledged to continue to get the best deal for the county and its communities by championing their cause in Parliament.

Members of the council have agreed to lobby on Phase 2a, which will run from the West Midlands to Crewe, to mitigate the impact of the high-speed line.

By Simon Stone

Councillor Mark Winnington, cabinet member for economic growth, said: "From the outset the county council has been committed to get the best outcome from HS2 for the county, for communities and for businesses in terms of mitigation, compensation, improved connectivity and a share in any economic benefits the project delivers.

"As part of our lobbying on Phase One we achieved the lowering of five miles of the route in Lichfield, bringing significant environmental mitigation, and it is only right that we continue to do everything can to get the best deal for Staffordshire in this next phase.

"We also secured the inclusion of the Handsacre Link, which will allow Staffordshire residents to benefit from high-speed travel via the hub at Stafford."

In total, the county council had about 100 petitioning points on Phase 1 of HS2.

HS2 will run through 45 miles of Staffordshire in Phase 1 and Phase 2a, with the route to Crewe due to open in 2026.

● Unauthorised payments to HS2 staff worth £1.76m were a 'shocking waste of taxpayers' money', a Commons committee has said.

The Public Accounts Committee urged the Department for Transport and the company to address the issues which led to the enhanced redundancy payouts 'as a matter of urgency'.

Absolutely Fab-ricant!

Lichfield MP Michael Fabricant with campaigners against domestic violence in Staffordshire

MICHAEL Fabricant has admitted that he feels 'strangely comfortable' in pink – and suggested he may don the colour in Parliament.

The flamboyant Tory MP tweeted a photograph of himself sporting a shocking pink feather scarf and salmon pink jeans at an anti-domestic violence rally in Staffordshire.

In the picture, Mr Fabricant, who represents Lichfield, is flanked by fellow campaigners and holds aloft a placard featuring the message "Real men don't hit women".

He tweeted the image to Labour backbencher Stella Creasy, who is urging people to wear pink in protest at Donald Trump's proposed state visit to the UK.

He tweeted: "I felt strangely comfortable in that colour...#MustWearinHouseofCommons." Ms Creasy responded by tweeting: "The feathers definitely suit you."

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Penny drops in to reveal his memoirs

Cannock Rotary Club

MORE than 50 Rotarians from around the district joined The Rotary Club of Cannock to hear the fascinating life story of Second World War veteran Flt Lt James A Penny.

Jim, aged 92, who lives in Shropshire, joined the RAF in 1941. After his training in the USA and Canada he was posted to RAF Shawbury where he flew Airspeed Oxfords before being posted to RAF Tilstock, training to fly Whitley Bombers.

He and his crew were asked to volunteer for Pathfinder duties flying Lancaster bombers from RAF Bourn in Cambridgeshire.

On their 19th mission, while over Berlin, Jim's Lancaster was hit by anti-aircraft fire. This detonated the 4,000lb bomb on board. The aircraft blew up and threw Jim clear, but no other crew member survived, hence the title of his memoirs 'The Lucky Penny'.

Jim was taken prisoner and held in solitary confinement for two months as the Luftwaffe suspected he was the pilot of a top secret Mosquito aircraft. He was a prisoner until the end of the war, then stayed in the Air force to complete 30 years service. He now spends quality time with his wife Ursula and family; he is still a very active croquet player.

After his talk Jim signed copies of his memoirs. He donates some of the proceeds from the sales of his book to the RAF Benevolent Fund.

Christmas meeting was a real cracker

Margaret Davenport, Kath Perry – who provided the entertainment – and Chrissy Whereat

Cannock and District Ladies Probus

DECEMBER'S meeting was Christmas themed with turkey and Christmas pudding served at The Chase Golf and Country Club.

Crackers were pulled, jokes shared and fellowship enjoyed. Entertainment was provided by Kath Perry singing a mixture of popular songs and carols. There was much hilarity as groups were chosen to take the parts of the Twelve Days of Christmas with Kath standing on one leg as the partridge in a pear tree!

Chairman Pam Clarke followed the talk by inducting new member Maureen who has now settled in Cannock after living in Australia and Spain. Members donated to charity in lieu of sending Christmas cards which raised £64 for the Air Ambulance and St Giles Hospice.

The next meeting will be held at The Chase Golf and Country Club on the first Thursday of the month at noon. Guests and prospective new members are welcome.

For further information call 01543 505107 or visit www.probusonline.org

Gifts donated to Pathway

SI Cannock & District

CANNOCK Soroptimists have again supported the Pathway Project by providing gifts such as clothing, beauty packs, toys and games for women and children who will be spending Christmas in a refuge as a result of domestic violence.

The donated gifts filled two cars and were gratefully accepted by Pathway staff.

On Christmas morning they will be able to open gifts specially chosen for them, knowing they are being thought of. SI Cannock & District had a stall at a winter fair at Norton Canes Community Centre.

Members sold reindeer food – they helped children to fill bags with food for Rudolph and his friends – as well as showcasing issues and organisations supported by Soroptimists.

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Garage steers to more success with a move to new premises

Commercial feature

Emery & Burton Ltd is a long-established motor vehicle repair garage and MOT centre based in Rugeley.

The company was established in 1978 by Mick Emery and Tim Burton.

They ran a successful business together for almost 30 years before it was taken over by the current owner Steve Kitson in 2005.

Steve first came to the company on work experience while he was still at school and this led to him gaining a part-time job on Saturdays until he finished school and went to work full-time at the garage.

Welcoming

Steve has continued to build up the success of the business and it has now relocated to new premises just down the road on Sheep Fair (formerly Motor Components).

After three months of hard work, and lots of help from family and friends, the building has been converted from a shop into a brand new garage workshop.

The new garage is equipped with brand new vehicle lifts, diagnostic equipment and a welcoming reception and waiting area.

Emery & Burton Ltd specialise in all types of vehicle servicing, diagnostics, air conditioning, tyre fitting, wheel alignment, and Class 4 MOTs.

They can offer while-you-wait appointments, and the garage is only a two-minute walk to the town centre.

Staff at Emery and Burton Ltd pride themselves on a reputation of reliability

A courtesy car is also available, should you need transport while your car is in for repair (subject to availability) and the business can also offer local collection and delivery.

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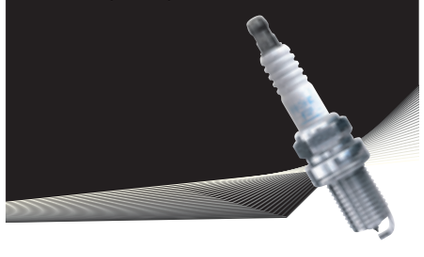

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Homes company builds up festive cheer for children

The Salvation Army's Kathryn and Richard Reynolds with Barratt Homes senior sales adviser Alex Evans

BARRATT Homes West Midlands has been passing on festive cheer to children thanks to the Salvation Army in Hednesford.

The housebuilder handed over toys donated by staff and residents at its developments to representatives from the Salvation Army's base in the town.

The toys are being distributed to children as Christmas presents.

Richard and Kathryn Reynolds collected dozens of toys from the sales centre at The Limes development in Cannock. Salvation Army Captain Richard Reynolds said: "We were delighted to receive so many toys from Barratt Homes's staff and residents, and we will ensure that they are passed on to those local children whose families are facing hardship.

It's a very generous gesture at this festive time of year and should help bring happiness."

Graydon Worthing, sales director for Barratt Homes West Midlands, said: "We want to be a part of the communities in which we build our new homes, and it's important to us to donate to local good causes, especially around Christmas time.

"We've asked our staff and our residents to donate toys to spread some joy to disadvantaged children this festive season, and we thank the Salvation Army for taking the time to collect and distribute them."

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Jokers go wild in Jack's Grand pantomime show

FE-FI-FO-FUN – expect some giant laughs at Wolverhampton's big panto Jack And The Beanstalk.

It's silly, a bit saucy and spectacular too, delivering all the traditional pantomime cliches with a local twist in a guaranteed Grand night out.

Jack And The Beanstalk, on at the Lichfield Street theatre until January 14, has got famous faces off the telly, lots of pop songs, jokey mentions for local towns, a hissable villain, a flamboyant dame and... Super Yam.

Doreen Tipton's latest panto stunt, after wowing the audiences in her debut on a mobility scooter in last year's Aladdin, is to don a superhero outfit in a panto closing scene that nearly brought the house down.

Doreen (aka Walsall actress Gill Jordan) injects typically downbeat Black Country humour into a show that has no shortage of jokers.

They've bean had – Gareth Gates and Lisa Riley as Mother Nature in the panto

Slapstick

Adam C Booth (perhaps best known as Keith Lemon's TV 'brother') is a highly energetic slapstick Simple Simon, whilst former Lichfield Garrick stalwart Ian Adams has some of the best lines and lots of stunning frocks as Dame Trot. But you may hope that some of their ruder double entendres fly over the children's heads.

Pop and stage star Gareth Gates shows a nice knack for humour too as Jack. I like him crooning If You Leave Me Cow to Daisy after he exchanges her for a bag of beans. His scene with love interest Jill (Sarah Vaughan, in fine voice) which is constantly interrupted by brother Simon was a howl, only topped by Mother Nature, played by Grand favourite Lisa Riley, with Dame, Simon and Doreen's chaotic 12 Days of Christmas.

It ay cowin' fair – Doreen Tipton is floored by Daisy the 'Coo' at the Grand

The musical highlights, accompanied by hard-working dancers, included versions of Can't Stop The Feeling and Rather Be.

Gareth's big number was, of course, his chart-topping cover of Unchained Melody (the second top selling single of the noughties).

You always need some baddies and former The Bill actor Graham Cole fit the bill as Fleshcreep, main henchman for a giant who made a big, and I mean BIG, appearance in the second act.

Credit to for another Garrick regular, Julie Paton, who was a touch of class as the operatic-voiced giant's Harp.

If you've Bean you know, otherwise, give this panto a fe-fi-go.

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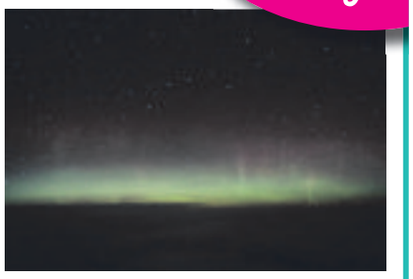

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WOLVERHAMPTON MAGAZINE

The grey panels on the bridge in Hednesford which are in need of brightening up

Artwork designs to brighten up bridge are put to the vote

BRIGHT artwork is set to replace drab grey panels either side of the road bridge at Hednesford railway station.

Three different designs have been put forward for the site in Market Street.

Residents in the area have been asked to cast their votes, which will be counted at the end of February.

It is hoped that the chosen artwork, protected by anti-graffiti paint, will be installed by Easter.

The Bridging Communities project is being overseen by Hednesford in Partnership (HiP), which has received £10,000 funding from Staffordshire County Council.

Schoolchildren have helped to conduct research by asking people from Hednesford what best represents the area.

Theme

That 'brief' was handed to Cannock artist Gez Whitehouse, who came up with the three designs.

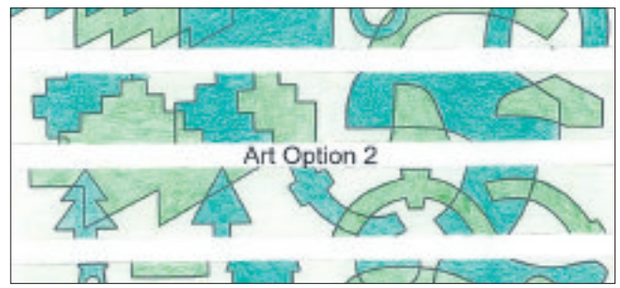
It is hoped the chosen piece will not only be installed at the bridge but also at other high-profile areas in Hednesford to create an artistic theme for the town.

HiP vice-chairman Paul Woodhead said: "It is all part of our work of trying to bring all of the groups in Hednesford together and rejuvenate the town.

"Hednesford is a gateway to the Chase, and it will have a big impact on those coming into the town from the railway station to have a great piece of artwork there."

Votes can be submitted by completing a voting slip from Hednesford Library or by visiting Hednesford in Partnership's Facebook page and selecting the appropriate 'like' emoji on the post about the project.

Gez Whitehouse drew up the designs



The public will vote for their favourite

The winner will be unveiled in February

Pilot's life saved by landing on farm bale

A MICROLIGHT pilot survived a crash by landing on an agricultural bale, a crash investigation has found.

The 43-year-old escaped life-threatening harm but had a serious leg injury among other injuries.

The pilot lost control of the Pegasus Quantum aircraft before spiralling hundreds of feet to the ground in Clent, near Stourbridge. A newly published report by the Air Accident Investigation Branch revealed inquiries have not been able to explain how one of the microlight wings folded before the crash in August last year.

But it said the life of the pilot, who was heading back to Halfpenny Green airport near Wolverhampton, was saved by landing on a large agricultural bale.

The report says that the pilot had flown to Otherton, near Penkridge, from Halfpenny Green in good conditions to carry out his annual flight test but because of a problem with the engine heat had decided to return to Halfpenny Green.

However, it says that during the flight the microlight suddenly began spiralling down to the ground out of control. The pilot thought this began at between 2,000 and 3,000ft but witnesses thought it was 200 to 500ft.

Pension funds backing £100m homes scheme

THE pension funds of local authority workers in Staffordshire and the West Midlands are being invested in a homes-for-rent scheme. In the face of rising rents and the nationwide housing crisis, Hearthstone Investment Management has put together a £100 million fund.

Bosses say the aim of the scheme is to buy clusters of houses and low-rise blocks in areas where there is solid rental demand. The Hearthstone Residential Fund 1 has five local authority pension funds as cornerstone investors, including the West Midlands Pension Fund and Staffordshire Pension Fund.

The other three backers are the local authority funds in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Teeside.

The Staffordshire scheme is worth around £4.6bn and has 106,000 members from 10 local authorities and related employers such as schools, colleges and housing associations.

The West Midlands fund looks after the pensions of council workers from Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall, Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry, and other public sector employees. It has 300,000 members and £14.3 billion in assets.

The fund will invest in buying newly built homes that appeal to families and young professionals.

Councillor Philip Atkins, chairman of the Staffordshire pensions panel and leader of Staffordshire County Council, said: "This is an opportunity for funds to make an investment that firstly meets our investment requirements, but also contributes in a small way to the housing need of the country.

"The growing demand and under-supply of quality housing, in particular in the private rented sector, makes residential property more resilient to economic downturns and attractive to long term investors."

Historic estate is lit up by lantern parade

Hand-crafted lanterns brighten the scene at Shugborough

SHUGBOROUGH Estate estate opened its doors for visitors wanting to enjoy its magical lantern parade.

Visitor experience officer at the National Trust venue Emyr Thomas said: "We were very pleased at how well it went. It seemed to have gone down well with the visitors."

Families were in their warmest winter wear as they prepared for the chilly weather during the two-hour special event on Saturday. Following the beat of illuminated red drums, they wandered along illuminated paths as they carried the lanterns across the parkland. The parade was organised by Stoke-on-Trent based charity B-Arts.

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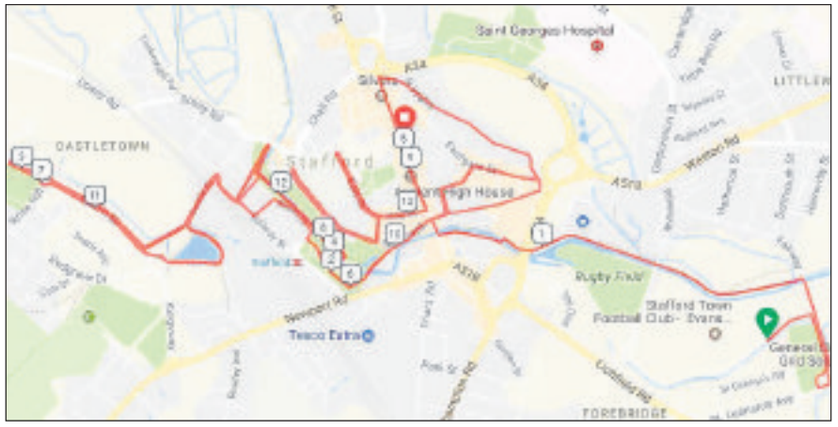
Riverway to Market Square for runners

New Ironman route is revealed for town



The new Ironman route takes runners on a loop through Stafford town centre. The numbers indicate mileage markers

Report by Carl Jackson
carl.jackson@expressandstar.co.uk

This is the new route for next year's Ironman 70.3 as its finish line shifts to Stafford town centre from Shugborough Estate.

Essentially there will be an all-new run course, a modified bike route while the swim leg will remain at Chasewater Country Park.

The 56 mile bike segment will still be a one lap course but it will see the removal of the loop section at Six Roads End and Hanbury, near Burton upon Trent.

Cannock Chase will feature once more but the second transition area will be located at Riverway, Stafford, taking athletes through Haywood and Tixall on the approach.

Once at Riverway the competitors will dismount and take on the new 13.1mile run along the River Sow and then on a three-lap course in Stafford town centre including Victoria Park, looping up and back down roads including Castle Street and Earl Street, before finishing at Market Square.

Dan James, Ironman 70.3 Stafford-shire race director, said: "Being able to bring the event into the town centre is a big positive and will certainly add a new dimension to the event both from an athlete and spectator perspective.

"The new run course will take athletes past some of the best features of the town, giving them ample opportunity to run past supporters on the route," he added.

Around 2,500 people are expected to sign up for next year.

● For video from the route, visit **expressandstar.com**

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Watchdog praises force for level of leadership

STAFFORDSHIRE Police have been praised by inspectors after a report on its legitimacy and leadership was published.

A spring inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services has praised the force's work in areas such as endorsing ethical behaviour, innovative approaches to training and acting upon feedback from staff.

Overall, the force was rated 'good' for legitimacy and leadership.

Welcoming the news, Deputy Chief Constable Nick Baker said: "Our new policing plan has fairness and respect towards our citizens at its core, and our ongoing work to reinforce our code of ethics ensures that our workforce strives towards the highest standards.

"I accept that there is still more work to be done around making certain parts of the organisation more accessible and transparent, but the Chief Constable and I are challenging the organisation through the new policing plan to deliver an even better service and to continue to engage with the public more and more."

The legitimacy inspection focuses on to what extent the force treats all of the people it serves with fairness and respect, how well the force ensures that its workforce behaves ethically and fairly, and to what extent does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect.

● A crackdown on drug abuse in Staffordshire will be stepped up following the introduction of new detection devices.

Plans to provide funding for the roll-out of new, nationally approved equipment has been approved by Matthew Ellis, the Staffordshire Police and Crime Commissioner.

The new equipment, funded by cash retrieved from the proceeds of crime, will replace outdated machines that have been used since 2000. The existing Ion Tracker machines had a lifespan of seven years but are now beyond economical repair.

Care home has revamp

MP Amanda Milling unveils the plaque to mark the reopening

A CARE home in Rugeley has reopened following an internal refurbishment.

Under new ownership, Lanrick Care Home in Wolseley Road has improved significantly, according to a reort by the Care Quality Commission.

It is now ranked good overall by the CQC – and in four of the five inspection categories.

Inspectors praised Heartlands Care, who now run the home, for its safety, effectiveness, responsiveness and care.

A report said: "People felt safe living at the home and their relatives were confident they were well cared for."

Cannock Chase MP Amanda Milling unveiled a plaque to mark the reopening.

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CCTV appeal in hunt for pensioner murder clues

POLICE investigating the murder of pensioner Arthur Gumbley have released CCTV of two men they would like to speak to.

Mr Gumbley, aged 87, died in hospital on December 12, three weeks after he was badly beaten and robbed in his own home in Little Aston on November 21.

Arthur Gumbley

Staffordshire Police have released images of two men who they believe may know something about where Mr Gumbley's stolen possessions are.

Detective Inspector Dan Ison said: "We have had a great response from the public, and the information has helped us move nearer to closing this case.

"However, the information we have received so far has been from an anonymous source, preventing us from building a solid case.

"If you are the person providing information anonymously, please come forward to the police to help us bring those responsible for this despicable crime to justice.

"Your identity will be protected throughout the criminal justice process, your name or face would never be shown in public, and we would provide you with the reassurance you need to remain safe whilst doing the right thing."

Two men and a woman who were arrested have been released on conditional bail. Anyone with information should call 101 quoting incident number 828 of 21 November.

Police would like to speak to this man

There are also images of this man

History centre cash doubts

FUNDING for the £4 million Staffordshire History Centre beyond 2021 has been thrown into doubt.

But plans are in place to set up a development trust in a bid to ensure the site can keep running after then.

The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Joint Archive Committee will meet today (Thursday) to discuss how setting up a trust would help the future running of the site. The scheme as a whole was given the green light in June 2016 after the Heritage Lottery Fund approved a grant of £333,400.

A second bid for the remaining amount will be submitted next year and, if approved, work could start in April 2019.

However, a report to today's meeting suggests that once Heritage Lottery Funding ceases, there may be difficulties in securing further cash.

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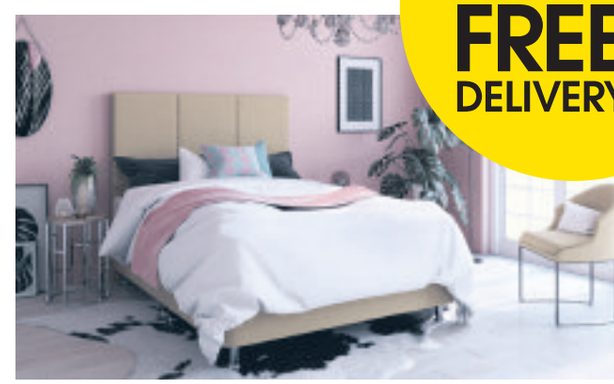

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Compton Hospice, which has secured £1.5m for its revamp

Claire Marshall with Paul Baugh, Mark Jenkins, Barrie Malia and Cyril Barrett

The new hub will bring together the services

£1.5m means Goodyear for hospice

COMPTON Hospice has secured the full £1.5 million for a major extension after ex-Goodyear workers agreed to donate the sum.

Work is due to begin in the summer on a new facility which has been hailed as a parting gift from the tyre giant synonymous with Wolverhampton.

The Goodyear workers' fund, built up over more than 30 years from sick and distress pay, initially pledged £1 million towards the project but now has confirmed it will be able to give another £500,000.

Cyril Barrett, chairman of the group of Unite members, said the community administration hub would act as a 'living legacy' of the Goodyear workers after the city's plant closed for good in August.

The redevelopment – which has been approved by Wolverhampton Council planners – will see the main building on Compton Road West redesigned.

The main purpose of the hub will be to bring the charity's range of support services including inpatient care, care in the home, daycare facilities and psychosocial care, under one roof, creating a single point of access for healthcare professionals and families.

A link between the hall and the hospice accommodation will be created.

Mr Barrett, from the Goodyear workers 5/344 Transport and General Workers Sick and Distress Fund, said members were proud something positive would come from the closure of the landmark plant, which resulted in hundreds losing their jobs.

He said: "We held 20 meetings with members and the one thing they made clear was supporting Compton Hospice was a priority.

"Planning permission has been granted and hopefully in the middle of next year we will see the start of the process of building the communication centre."

Legacy

He added: "It is so important to us. The hospice has provided care and support to families of many of our members. This is a project we wanted to do.

"On behalf of my colleagues, I am absolutely delighted and so proud.

"What we are doing is what we promised, creating a living legacy to good, honest, hard-working people who have been members of the fund since 1985."

Mr Barrett said the workers' group, which has supported countless charities across the Black Country, had budgeted to be able to give £1.5 million but was only now in a position to confirm it could provide the full amount.

It means hospice bosses will not have to apply elsewhere for additional funding.

Compton Hospice chief executive Claire Marshall said: "It's so exciting. Patients' needs are getting more complex and we want to serve more patients than we ever have. It means we will have a really good, co-ordinated service.

"We co-ordinate care between GPs, hospitals and other care providers. Having this facility is essential going forward to help provide a seamless experience for patients."

Ms Marshall said hospice bosses had been overwhelmed by the support of the former Goodyear workers. She said: "£1.5 million is a vast amount of money by anybody's measure and the fact it is coming from the community which has supported us for decades is amazing. It came as a surprise, certainly the scale of it.

When it started, to get £1 million we were just euphoric. Now it has been extended to £1.5 million – the whole cost of the project – is just incredible."

After securing planning permission for the extension, finding the extra money needed for the scheme means Compton has now passed the final hurdle. Work is expected to take up to nine months.

Fund secretary and former Goodyear worker Paul Bough said: "Everyone has got some sort of affinity with Compton Hospice, their family has been helped."

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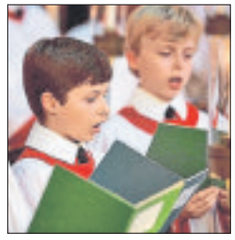
Christmas Eve

BBC 1

Michael McIntyre's Big Christmas Show, on at 8.30pm

6.00 Breakfast **7.25** Match of the Day (R) **9.05 FILM: Planes (2013)** ★★ **10.30 FILM: The Santa Clause (1994)** ★★★ **12.00 Life in the Snow** Gordon Buchanan meets animals that live in snowy conditions. (R) **1.00 BBC News;** Weather. **1.15 Songs of Praise: The Big Sing** Katherine Jenkins and JB Gill present a carol concert from the Royal Albert Hall. **1.45 Shaun the Sheep: The Farmer's Llamas** Shaun causes mayhem at a country fair. (R) **2.15 Hammy's Boomerang Adventure** Over the Hedge short spin-off. (R) **2.20 FILM: Monsters University (2013)** Animated comedy prequel, with the voices of John Goodman and Billy Crystal. ★★★

BBC 2

The annual service from King's College, Carols from King's, 5.45pm

6.15 Nature's Weirdest Events (R) **7.00** Island Parish Shetland (R) **7.30 FILM: The Prince and Me (2004)** Romantic comedy, starring Julia Stiles and Luke Mably. ★★ **9.15 The Big Family Cooking Showdown** (R) **10.15 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites** Matt Tebbutt presents highlights of the series. **11.45 Mary Berry's Absolute Christmas Favourites** (R) **12.20 The Hairy Bikers Home for Christmas** Dave Myers and Si King create a series of festive recipes. **1.20 Alex Polizzi's Perfect Christmas** The hotelier presents a guide to entertaining at home over the festive period. (R) **2.20 Cheetahs – Growing Up Fast** Two years in the lives of a cheetah mother and her cubs. (R)

ITV

Bradley Walsh hosts, A Christmas Chase: Celebrity Special, 5.50pm

6.00 CITV: Sooty. (R) **6.10 Bottom Knocker Street** (R) **6.20 Bottom Knocker Street** (R) **6.35 Dino Dana** (R) **6.45 Super 4** (R) **7.00 Signed Stories: Share a Story** (R) **7.05 Om Nom Stories 7.10 Nerds & Monsters** (R) **7.20 Nerds & Monsters** (R) **7.30 The Tom and Jerry Show** (R) **7.40 The Tom and Jerry Show** (R) **7.45 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R) **8.00 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R) **8.10 Horrid Henry** (R) **8.25 Make It Pop** (R) **8.55 Scrambled! Christmas Stocking** (R) **9.25 Save Money: Good Food** (R) **9.55 FILM: Jack Frost (1998)** ★ **11.50 Catchphrase Christmas Special** (R) **12.45 ITV News and Weather;** Weather. **12.55 FILM: Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets (2002)** ★★★

Ch4

Child Genius vs Celebrities Christmas Special, on at 8.00pm

7.00 FILM: The Rugrats in Paris: The Movie (2000) Animated adventure, with the voice of Christine Cavanaugh. ★★★ **8.15 The Big Bang Theory** (R) **8.40 The Big Bang Theory** (R) **9.05 Jamie's Quick & Easy Food** (R) **9.40 Christmas Brunch** With guests Anton Du Beke, Danny Mac and Tom Fletcher. **12.40 Paul Hollywood: A Baker's Life** Paul shares his favourite Mediterranean recipes on a trip to Cyprus. Last in the series. (R) **1.10 Jamie's Italian Christmas** Jamie Oliver cooks a festive meal with an Italian twist. (R) **2.10 The Simpsons** A corporation buys Springfield Elementary School. (R) **2.40 The Simpsons** An adult Bart and Lisa return home for Christmas with their parents. (R)

Ch5

Last in the series, The Yorkshire Vet at Christmas, on at 8.00pm

6.00 Milkshake! 9.20 FILM: Gone with the Wind (1939) A plantation heiress has a tumultuous relationship with a roguish Southern gentleman during the American Civil War. Epic romantic drama, starring Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable. ★★★★ **1.35 FILM: Oklahoma! (1955)** A farm girl is torn between two suitors, a charming cowboy and a grim, brooding farmhand. Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical Western, starring Gordon MacRae and Shirley Jones. ★★★

Early View

Prime Time

3.55 Doodlebugs
4.10 Home (2015) ★★★
5.35 BBC News
5.50 Midlands Today; Weather
6.00 Countryfile
7.00 Mary, Mel and Sue's Big Christmas Thank You Mary Berry, Mel Giedroyc and Sue Perkins prepare a festive surprise for volunteers at a community centre that has been a focal point for a struggling South Wales town.
8.00 EastEnders Lauren and Abi make their feelings clear to Max, Karen confronts her children about the stolen phones and Mick tells Phil he wants nothing more to do with the job.
8.30 Michael McIntyre's Big Christmas Show The comedy star concludes his entertainment showcase with a festive special, featuring performances by soul singer Seal and comedian Bill Bailey.
9.35 Not Going Out Christmas Special Lee buys the perfect Christmas present for his children, but the kids' grandparents have the same idea, leaving him on a race against time to find an alternative.
10.15 BBC News; Weather.
10.30 The Vicar of Dibley The villagers celebrate Christmas, and vicar Geraldine learns there is a heavy price to be paid for festive kindness when she agrees to attend three slap-up lunches. (R)
11.15 The Two Ronnies Sketchbook (R)
11.45 Midnight Mass from Leeds Cathedral The traditional Christmas Eve service from St Anne's Roman Catholic Cathedral. Featuring the Leeds Cathedral Choir and Leeds Trinity Cathedral Boys' and Girls' Choirs.
1.00 FILM: Great Expectations (2012) ★★★

3.20 Guys and Dolls (1955) Musical, starring Frank Sinatra and Marlon Brando. ★★★★
5.45 Carols from King's The annual service from King's College, Cambridge.
7.00 Dad's Army Mainwaring's men face the might of a rival platoon in a battle to prove their worth. Arthur Lowe and John Le Mesurier play the superannuated soldiers. (R)
8.00 Christmas University Challenge 2017 New series. Jeremy Paxman presents the first round, featuring famous alumni from Durham University and Keble College, Oxford, competing for a place in the semi-finals.
8.30 Winter's Weirdest Events Chris Packham explores unusual and unexplained natural events that occur around the world during winter, from tornadoes made of snow to penguins attempting death-defying feats.
9.30 The Great Gatsby (2013) Premiere. A naive writer befriends a decadent millionaire and slowly uncovers the dark underside of his lavish lifestyle. Period drama, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Tobey Maguire. ★★★
11.55 Christmas TOTP2 Special Mark Radcliffe presents festive performances from the Top of the Pops archive, including classics by Slade, Wham!, Wizzard, East 17, Mud, the Jackson 5 and Johnny Mathis. (R)
1.25 FILM: Whitney: Can I Be Me (2017) The life story of Whitney Houston, who died in 2012 aged 48. ★★★ **3.05 Sign Zone: Holby City** Morven is torn between her past and her future. Last in the series. (R) **4.05 This Is BBC Two** Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC Two.

4.00 Cannonball Christmas Special Festive edition of the water-based obstacle course challenge, hosted by Andrew Flintoff.
5.00 You've Been Framed! Unwrapped Harry Hill narrates festive-themed clips. (R)
5.30 ITV News Central; Weather.
5.35 ITV News and Weather
5.50 A Christmas Chase: Celebrity Special With Patti Clare, Matt Richardson, Kirsty Wark and Jimmy Osmond.
6.40 All Star Musicals Andrew Flintoff and Michael Crawford present a show in which seven famous faces each perform a song from a famous musical in front of a packed house at the London Palladium.
8.30 Maigret in Montmartre The detective investigates the seemingly random murders of a countess and a showgirl – and discovers an unexpected connection between the two victims' past experiences.
10.25 ITV News and Weather; Weather.
10.45 A Night for the Emergency Services Members of the emergency services team show off their performance skills, teaming up with the likes of Diversity, Leona Lewis, Michael Ball and Alfie Boe, and Tokio Myers. (R)
11.45 Christmas Carols on ITV Alfie Boe introduces a traditional Christmas Eve carol service, featuring Nadine Coyle, Alexander O'Neal, Howard Hewett, Alexis French, Ruthie Henshall and Natasha Barnes.
12.45 FILM: Casino Royale (1967) Spoof James Bond adventure, starring David Niven. ★ **3.00 ITV Nightscreen 5.00 The Aquabats! Super Show!** (R) **5.25 Make It Pop** (R) **5.45 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R)

3.05 The Simpsons (R)
3.35 The Borrowers (1997) Children's fantasy, starring John Goodman. ★★★
5.20 The Snowman Animated adventure, based on Raymond Briggs' festive tale. (R)
5.55 The Snowman and the Snowdog (R)
6.20 Channel 4 News
6.30 The Muppet Christmas Carol (1992) Puppet comedy, starring Michael Caine. ★★★
8.00 Child Genius vs Celebrities Christmas Special Richard Osman hosts a Christmas special in which past competitors return to take on a team of celebrities comprising Rob Delaney, Cathy Newman, Dom Joly and Janet Street-Porter.
9.00 Gogglebox 2017 Highlights from the most recent series, featuring the armchair critics' reactions to The Crystal Maze, the Weakest Link Celebrity Special, and Mary Berry's Country House Secrets.
11.05 The Inbetweeners The friends decide to play truant from sixth form and buy alcohol for an all-day drinking session, which is interrupted when Neil's father comes home early. (R)
11.35 The Inbetweeners The gang goes on the infamous sociology and geography field trip to Swanage, and Will takes a shine to new girl Lauren – but she is only interested in Simon. (R)
12.10 The Inbetweeners (R) **12.40 The Inbetweeners** (R) **1.05 The Inbetweeners** (R) **1.35 Man Down Christmas Special** (R) **2.00 The Last Leg Christmas Special** (R) **2.55 The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special** (R) **3.50 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA** (R) **4.40 Location, Location, Location** (R) **5.35 Four in a Bed** (R)

4.15 Scrooge – A Christmas Carol (1951) (b/w) ★★★★
6.00 Agatha Christie's Crooked House (R)
7.00 5 News Update The latest headlines, sport and weather.
7.05 Agatha Christie's Crooked House Adaptation of the mystery novel, starring Max Irons and Terence Stamp. A man returning to London from Cairo investigates the poisoning of his fiancee's grandfather. (R)
8.00 The Yorkshire Vet at Christmas Peter Wright is called to an emergency at John Swales' farm, where one of his prize-winning Limousins is struggling to give birth. Last in the series.
9.00 André Rieu: My Life in Music Profile of the violinist, examining his upbringing in the Netherlands, early musical influences, and the bold moves that have made him one of classical music's biggest stars.
10.20 Andre Rieu: Christmas in London A festive concert by the Dutch violinist and the Johann Strauss Orchestra, featuring carols as well as songs including Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah and the Concierto de Aranjuez. (R)
11.30 An Audience with Donny & Marie The Osmond siblings entertain a celebrity audience in a programme based on their Las Vegas stage show, featuring old favourites and songs from their 2009 Donny & Marie album. (R)
12.35 Lip Sync Battle UK: Rufus Hound v Jorgie Porter (R) **1.00 SuperCasino 3.05 Love/Hate** (R) **4.00 My Mum's Hotter Than Me!** (R) **4.50 House Doctor** (R) **5.15 Access 5.20 Wildlife SOS** (R) **5.45 Chinese Food in Minutes** (R)

Late View

Christmas Day

Early View

BBC 1

Jenny Agutter stars, Call the Midwife, on at 7.40pm

6.00 Breakfast News, entertainment and weather reports. **9.00 CBeebies' The Snow Queen** Stage musical adaptation of the tale by Hans Christian Andersen. **9.45 Go Jetters. 10.00 Christmas Morning from All Saints Fulham** A live service led by the Rev Penny Seabrook. **11.00 The Madagascar Penguins in a Christmas Caper** (R) **11.10 Snow Chick: A Penguin's Tale** Following the first months in the life of an emperor penguin. (R) **12.10 BBC News;** Weather. **12.20 Top of the Pops Christmas Special** With performances by Ed Sheeran, Dua Lipa, Clean Bandit, Rita Ora and the Script. **1.20 FILM: Toy Story 3 (2010)** Animated adventure, with the voices of Tom Hanks and Tim Allen. ★★★★

BBC 2

David Mitchell stars in the comedy, Upstart Crow, on at 8.25pm

6.10 The Hairy Bikers Home for Christmas With the Rev Kate Bottley and Jon Culshaw. (R) **7.10 Island Parish Shetland** (R) **7.40 FILM: Bee Movie (2007)** Animated comedy, with the voice of Jerry Seinfeld. ★★★ **9.00 The Big Family Cooking Showdown** Families from Wiltshire and Birmingham compete. (R) **10.00 Harry Potter: A History of Magic** (R) **11.00 Carols from King's** The annual service from King's College, Cambridge. (R) **12.15 FILM: The Importance of Being Earnest (2002)** Oscar Wilde comedy, starring Rupert Everett and Colin Firth. ★★★ **1.40 BBC Proms 2017: Oklahoma!** Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical Oklahoma!

ITV

Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs at Christmas, on at 7.00pm

6.00 CITV: Sooty. (R) **6.10 Oddbods** (R) **6.15 Om Nom Stories** (R) **6.20 Signed Stories: Share a Story** (R) **6.25 Almost Naked Animals** (R) **6.35 Horrid Henry** (R) **6.50 Horrid Henry** (R) **7.05 Horrid Henry** (R) **7.20 Horrid Henry** (R) **7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled! Christmas Special 7.35 Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show** (R) **7.50 Scrambled!: The Bagel and Becky Show** (R) **8.10 Scrambled!: Teen Titans Go!** (R) **8.30 Scrambled!: Be Cool, Scooby-Doo!** (R) **9.05 Scrambled!: Wishfart** (R) **9.25 FILM: National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation (1989)** ★★★ **11.10 FILM: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007)** ★ **12.50 FILM: Santa Claus: The Movie (1985)** ★★

Ch4

The restaurant hosts a festive party, First Dates at Christmas, 9.00pm

6.00 FILM: Rugrats Go Wild (2003) ★★ **7.20 The Bear** (R) **7.45 Prep & Landing: Naughty vs Nice** (R) **8.10 Prep & Landing** (R) **8.40 Ice Age: A Mammoth Christmas** (R) **9.05 The Simpsons** (R) **9.35 The Simpsons** (R) **10.05 The Simpsons** (R) **10.35 The Simpsons** (R) **11.05 FILM: Dr Seuss' The Lorax (2012)** ★★★ **12.45 The Snowman** Animated adventure, based on Raymond Briggs' festive tale. (R) **1.20 The Snowman and the Snowdog** Animated sequel to classic festive tale The Snowman. (R) **1.55 Father Christmas** (R) **2.25 Channel 4 News 2.30 The Alternative Christmas Message 2.35 FILM: Scrooged (1988)** Christmas comedy, starring Bill Murray. ★★★

Ch5

Britain's Best Loved Double Acts: Christmas Special, on at 10.55pm

6.00 Milkshake! 8.55 FILM: Scrooge (1970) A miserly man is taught the error of his ways by a host of spectral visitors. Musical adaptation of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol, starring Albert Finney and Alec Guinness. ★★★ **11.05 FILM: Seven Brides for Seven Brothers (1954)** A cowboy decides to get married, prompting his six hellraising brothers to kidnap brides for themselves. Stanley Donen's musical Western, starring Howard Keel and Jane Powell. ★★★★ **1.05 FILM: Singin' in the Rain (1952)** A silent-movie star tries to win the heart of an aspiring actress as the dawn of sound changes the film business for ever. Musical comedy, starring Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds. ★★★★

Prime Time

3.00 The Queen's Christmas Broadcast
3.10 Cinderella (2015) ★★★
4.45 The Highway Rat
5.15 BBC News; Weather.
5.30 Doctor Who
6.30 Strictly Come Dancing Christmas Special
7.40 Call the Midwife Boxing Day sees heavy snowfall covering the country and the adverse weather causes major disruption across Poplar as roads become blocked and pipes freeze.
9.00 EastEnders Things are set to explode for Max as Stacey's phone – with all Jane's incriminating voicemails – is returned to her. Mick discovers the hard way not to cross Aidan Maguire.
10.00 Mrs Brown's Boys Christmas Special First of two festive specials. Grandad is convinced the house is haunted, Cathy has an internet date and Rory hopes to improve his looks by undergoing plastic surgery.
10.35 300 Years of French & Saunders Comedy double act Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders mark the 30th anniversary of their eponymous sketch show, which ran for six series up until 2007.
11.25 BBC News; Weather.
11.40 On Christmas Night Colin Salmon reads Luke's account of the angels appearing to shepherds in the fields above Bethlehem to proclaim the joyful news of the birth of Christ.
11.45 Have I Got a Bit More 2017 News for You An extended compilation of memorable moments from the satirical quiz over the past year, with a variety of guest hosts and panellists joining captains Paul Merton and Ian Hislop.
12.30 Darcey Bussell: Looking for Fred Astaire (R) **1.30 Weather for the Week Ahead 1.35 BBC News**

4.30 Dame Vera Lynn: Happy 100th Birthday (R)
5.30 Sign Zone: The Queen's Christmas Broadcast (R)
5.35 The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show (R)
6.45 Winter's Weirdest Events (R)
7.45 Dad's Army Frazer is unable to hide his delight when Captain Mainwaring's disreputable brother gatecrashes a sherry party for local dignitaries. Classic comedy, starring Arthur Lowe. (R)
8.25 Upstart Crow Will's new play is to be performed at the queen's Christmas festivities, while the Shakespeares find themselves with some uninvited guests. Emma Thompson guest stars as Elizabeth I.
9.00 Tom Jones & Beverley Knight's Gospel Christmas Tom Jones and Beverley Knight host a festive concert from Cardiff featuring a blend of traditional gospel, carols and songs of spiritual intent by greats like Prince and Bob Dylan. First shown on BBC One Wales.
10.00 Judi Dench: All the World's Her Stage Billy Connolly, Samantha Bond, Daniel Craig and Ian McKellen are among those reminiscing about the veteran actress in this celebration of her 60-year career. (R)
11.05 Mrs Henderson Presents (2005) A widow invests her fortune in an abandoned London theatre and defies censorship laws to stage a controversial nude revue. Fact-based comedy drama, with Judi Dench. ★★★
12.45 FILM: My Week with Marilyn (2011) ★★★ **2.15 This Is BBC Two**

3.00 The Queen Her Majesty's annual address.
3.10 Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (2004) The teenage wizard is alarmed to learn a dangerous fugitive sorcerer is searching for him. The third in the fantasy adventure series, starring Daniel Radcliffe and Gary Oldman. ★★★
5.50 Emmerdale Robert gets a taste of how different his life could be.
6.50 ITV News and Weather
7.00 Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs at Christmas Paul follows the work of Battersea Dogs & Cats Home over the festive period, hoping to find a home for a heavily pregnant stray found wet and bedraggled on Hampstead Heath.
8.00 Coronation Street Peter threatens to kill Billy, Carla's surprise arrival annoys Aidan, Daniel finds Tracy sneaking Steve out of Number 1, and Brian is arrested.
9.00 Victoria The queen and Prince Albert have very different expectations for a family Christmas and the arrival of guests at the palace causes further tension. Starring Jenna Coleman.
11.00 ITV News and Weather
11.15 The Holiday (2006) Two single women from opposite sides of the Atlantic find love after they swap houses over Christmas. Romantic comedy, with Cameron Diaz. ★★
1.45 FILM: The Dam Busters (1954) An engineer designs an ingenious bouncing bomb to destroy major dams in Germany's industrial heartland. Fact-based Second World War drama, with Michael Redgrave and Richard Todd. (b/w) ★★★★ **3.50 ITV Nightscreen**

4.30 Dumbo (1941) Disney animated adventure, with the voice of Edward Brophy. ★★★★
5.50 Home Alone (1990) Family comedy, starring Macaulay Culkin. ★★★
7.40 The Great Christmas Bake Off Part one of two. Former contestants Paul Jagger, Beca Lyne-Pirkis, Selasi Gbormittah and Val Stones face three festive challenges in a bid to win the Christmas Star Baker title.
9.00 First Dates at Christmas The restaurant hosts a festive party as maitre d' Fred and his Christmas Cupids celebrate a year that has seen proposals, engagement rings and the show's very first baby.
10.00 Alan Carr's Christmas Chatty Man With guests Noel Gallagher, Christian Slater, John Bishop, Lorraine Kelly, Rob Beckett and Gogglebox stars Giles and Mary. Plus, music by Kasabian, Adam Lambert and Dua Lipa.
12.00 George Michael: Freedom The singer-songwriter narrates a documentary charting his life and career, focusing on the period around the release of his 1990 album Listen without Prejudice Vol 1. (R) **1.40 George Michael: Live in London** Footage from the singer-songwriter's two shows at London's Earls Court in August 2008. (R) **2.45 The Crystal Maze** A team of fast-food workers tackles the zones. (R) **3.40 Location, Location, Location** Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer revisit property-hunters in London. (R) **4.35 Four in a Bed** The competitors are invited to Grassington Lodge in North Yorkshire. (R) **5.00 Kirstie's Handmade Christmas** Kirstie Allsopp showcases some of the best Christmas cakes. (R) **5.20 FILM: Moomins on the Riviera (2014)** Premiere. Children's animation, with the voice of Russell Tovey. ★★★

3.10 Oliver! (1968) Musical, starring Ron Moody. ★★★★
6.00 Elf: The Musical West End star Ben Forster is Buddy, the human child raised as one of Santa's elves in this musical stage adaptation of the hit 2003 festive film of the same name. (R)
9.00 The Morecambe and Wise Story: Look Back in Laughter Documentary making use of old performances, chat show appearances and archive interviews to shed light on the successful comedy careers of Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise. (R)
10.55 Britain's Best Loved Double Acts: Christmas Special Festive fun featuring some of the greatest double acts on the small screen, including Morecambe and Wise, French and Saunders, the Two Ronnies, Ant and Dec, and Cannon and Ball. (R)
11.55 Steptoe and Son (1972) Harold marries a stripper – but makes the mistake of letting Albert tag along on the honeymoon. Comedy based on the TV series, starring Harry H Corbett and Wilfrid Brambell. ★★★
1.45 SuperCasino Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.05 Love/Hate** John Boy believes Stumpy has become an informant after the gardai raid one of his drug factories, and orders Darren to exact a violent revenge. (R) **4.00 Now That's Funny!** A collection of internet-sourced videos with a family friendly hook, featuring people who crash weddings, sporting fails and flops, and science experiments. (R) **4.45 House Doctor** Home improvement highlights from the series. (R) **5.10 House Busters** (R) **5.35 Wildlife SOS** (R)

Late View

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Boxing Day

BBC 1

Documentary following polar bears, Snow Bears, on at 6.30pm

Early View

6.00 Breakfast News, entertainment and weather reports. **9.00 FILM: Tinker Bell and the Legend of the NeverBeast (2014)** ★★★ **10.10 FILM: Planes: Fire & Rescue (2014)** Premiere. Animated adventure sequel, with the voice of Dane Cook. ★★★ **11.25 Mary, Mel and Sue's Big Christmas Thank You** (R) **12.25 BBC News;** Weather. **12.35 Midlands Today; Weather 12.45 Judi Dench: My Passion for Trees** The actress discovers how trees are a part of Britain's history. (R) **1.45 Stick Man** Animated adaptation of Julia Donaldson's children's book. (R) **2.10 FILM: Shaun the Sheep Movie (2015)** Premiere. Animation, featuring the voice of Justin Fletcher. ★★★★

Prime Time

3.30 Doodlebugs Sketch show in which inanimate objects talk.
3.45 Mary Poppins (1964) Disney musical fantasy, with Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke. ★★★★
6.00 BBC News at Six; Weather
6.20 Midlands Today; Weather
6.30 Snow Bears Documentary following polar bears and their cubs as they travel 400 miles to reach the North Pole as spring sets in, encountering other Arctic wildlife along the way.
7.30 EastEnders Life for the Brannings will never be the same again as the horror of what has happened unfolds – but it soon becomes clear Max's actions have even wider repercussions.
8.00 Little Women New series. Heidi Thomas's adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's 19th-century American coming-of-age tale begins as the four March sisters contemplate a Christmas without their father.
9.00 The Miniaturist Two-part adaptation of Jessie Burton's best-selling novel set in 1686, following 18-year-old Nella Oortman as she begins a new life in Amsterdam as the wife of a wealthy merchant.
10.30 BBC News; Weather; National Lottery Update
10.45 Match of the Day Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Bournemouth v West Ham United, Huddersfield Town v Stoke City, and West Bromwich Albion v Everton.

Late View

12.15 Stacey Dooley in the USA (R) **1.15 Weather for the Week Ahead 1.20 BBC News**

BBC 2

New series, Two Doors Down - Christmas Special, on at 10.30pm

Early View

6.15 Sign Zone: Celebrity Antiques Road Trip Strictly Come Dancing 2016 champions Ore Oduba and Joanne Clifton compete. (R) **7.15 Island Parish Shetland** (R) **7.45 FILM: Chimpanzee (2012)** Premiere. Documentary following an orphaned chimpanzee. ★★★ **8.55 The Big Family Cooking Showdown** (R) **9.55 Nadiya's British Food Adventure** (R) **10.25 Nadiya's British Food Adventure** (R) **10.55 The Sweet Makers: A Tudor Treat** (R) **11.55 FILM: A Hard Day's Night (1964)** Musical comedy, starring the Beatles. (b/w) ★★★★ **1.20 FILM: The Eagle Has Landed (1976)** Second World War spy adventure, with Michael Caine. ★★★

Prime Time

3.30 The Repair Shop at Christmas (R)
4.30 Final Score
5.35 Matthew Bourne's Cinderella
7.30 Christmas University Challenge 2017 Selwyn College, Cambridge, featuring writer Robin French, take on St Andrews University, with BBC Scotland Political Editor Brian Taylor hoping for victory. Jeremy Paxman hosts.
8.00 Reindeer Family & Me Gordon Buchanan goes to live with a family from the nomadic Sami culture in Finnish Lapland, and undertakes a journey across the frozen wilderness with the help of a reindeer.
9.00 Dragons' Den A serial entrepreneur pitches his online greeting card business, and a Surrey-based inventor hopes his word game could become a family Christmas favourite.
10.00 QI Sandi Toksvig hosts the festive edition with Jason Manford, Romesh Ranganathan, Holly Walsh and Alan Davies answering the questions.
10.30 Two Doors Down – Christmas Special New series. Beth and Eric's plans for a quiet festive feast are thwarted when Cathy and Colin's flight to the French Alps is cancelled, and Christine also turns up with her granddaughter.
11.00 Joanna & Jennifer: Absolutely Champers Absolutely Fabulous duo Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders explore the Champagne region of north eastern France to find out how their characters' favourite tipple is made. (R)

Late View

12.00 Saturday Night Fever – The Ultimate Disco Movie (R) **1.10 Tom Jones & Beverley Knight's Gospel Christmas** (R)

ITV

Festive edition, Birds of a Feather Christmas Special, 10.15pm

Early View

6.00 CITV: Sooty. (R) **6.10 Oddbods** (R) **6.15 Om Nom Stories** (R) **6.20 Signed Stories: Share a Story** (R) **6.25 Almost Naked Animals** (R) **6.35 Nerds & Monsters** (R) **6.50 Nerds & Monsters** (R) **7.05 Horrid Henry** (R) **7.20 Wishfart** (R) **7.30 Scrambled!: Scrambled! Christmas Special 7.35 Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show** (R) **7.50 Scrambled!: The Bagel and Becky Show** (R) **8.10 Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls** (R) **8.30 FILM: Scrambled!: Scooby-Doo! Haunted Holidays (2012)** ★★★ **9.05 Scrambled!: Horrid Henry** (R) **9.25 FILM: Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986)** ★★★★ **11.25 FILM: Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010)** ★ **1.00 ITV Racing: Live from Kempton**

Prime Time

3.30 E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial (1982) Sci-fi fantasy, with Henry Thomas. ★★★★
5.50 ITV News and Weather
6.10 Emmerdale Diane comforts Robert as he crumbles after reading a thank you card for Seb's presents, and watching from the shadows, Rebecca is struck by his emotion.
6.40 Jurassic World (2015) Premiere. A safari park for genetically engineered dinosaurs creates a new species – but it quickly escapes to terrorise the tourists. Action adventure sequel, with Chris Pratt. ★★★
9.00 Coronation Street Eileen keeps vigil over a comatose Billy while worrying about a missing Todd, Daniel finds Adam semi-conscious, and Carla begs Roy not to reveal her secret.
10.00 ITV News and Weather
10.15 Birds of a Feather Christmas Special Tracey's plans could upset the festive harmony, Sharon finds a novel way of doing her Christmas shopping and Dorien has a mystery to solve. Comedy, starring Pauline Quirke. (R)
11.15 The Keith and Paddy Picture Show Keith Lemon and Paddy McGuinness enlist the aid of Will Mellor, Robbie Williams, Sarah Parish, Emma Willis and Chris Kamara and others as they remake the 1984 classic Ghostbusters. (R)
11.45 Al Murray's Make Christmas Great Again Philosopher, common sense commando, scholar, sage and bald bloke The Pub Landlord arranges a lock-in with a celebrity guest audience for a lively mix of music and chat. (R)

Late View

12.45 Jackpot247 3.00 Tenable (R) **3.50 ITV Nightscreen 5.05 The Jeremy Kyle Show** (R)

Ch4

The family recalls stories about disasters at sea, The Simpsons, 10.25am

Early View

6.40 FILM: Song of the Sea (2014) Animated fantasy, with the voice of Lucy O'Connell. ★★★★ **8.25 FILM: Short Circuit (1986)** Sci-fi comedy adventure, starring Steve Guttenberg. ★★★ **10.25 The Simpsons** The family recalls stories about disasters at sea. (R) **10.50 The Simpsons** A department store Santa grants Lisa's Christmas wish. (R) **11.15 The Simpsons** (R) **11.40 The Simpsons** Marge loses all memory of Homer. (R) **12.10 FILM: Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel (2009)** Comedy, starring Zachary Levi. ★★ **1.55 Channel 4 News** Including sport and weather. **2.00 Child Genius vs Celebrities Christmas Special** Past competitors return to take on a team of celebrities. (R)

Prime Time

3.05 The Great Christmas Bake Off Part one of two. Former contestants compete in a series of festive challenges. (R)
4.20 The Little Mermaid (1989) Animated adventure, with the voice of Jodi Benson. ★★★★
6.00 Back to the Future (1985) A teenager travels back in time and gets stuck in the 1950s – where he has to make sure his parents fall in love. Sci-fi comedy adventure, with Michael J Fox and Christopher Lloyd. ★★★★
8.00 Travel Man: 48 Hours in Hong Kong Richard Ayoade is joined by actor Jon Hamm, star of Mad Men and Baby Driver, for a Yuletide trek around Hong Kong – the most visited and most vertical city on the planet.
9.00 Big Fat Quiz of the Year 2017 Jimmy Carr hosts a comedy quiz looking back at the past 12 months, with panellists Richard Ayoade, Noel Fielding, David Mitchell, Big Narstie, Roisin Conaty and Katherine Ryan.
11.10 Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994) A man's misfortunes in love look set to change when he meets an American beauty at a wedding. Richard Curtis's romantic comedy, starring Hugh Grant, Andie MacDowell and John Hannah. ★★★★

Late View

1.20 The Inbetweeners (R) **1.50 The Inbetweeners** (R) **2.15 The Inbetweeners** (R) **2.45 The Inbetweeners** (R) **3.10 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA** (R) **4.00 Location, Location, Location** (R) **4.55 Kirstie's Handmade Christmas** (R) **5.10 FILM: Moshi Monsters: The Movie (2013)** Animated adventure, with the voice of Emma Tate. ★★★

Ch5

The Strictly Story: Fake Tan, Tangos & a 10 from Len, on at 7.00pm

Early View

6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 Access 9.25 Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud Clips of foul-mouthed parrots and a water-skiing squirrel. (R) **10.00 FILM: Titanic (1953)** An aristocrat trying to stop his wife and children leaving him finds them on board the ill-fated ship. Drama, with Clifton Webb and Barbara Stanwyck. (b/w) ★★★ **11.50 FILM: Chariots of Fire (1981)** Oscar-winning drama based on the true story of British runners Eric Liddell and Harold Abrahams, going for gold at the 1924 Olympics in Paris. ★★★★ **2.10 Balmoral: A Hidden History** Documentary offering a behind-scenes look at the secluded royal retreat that covers 50,000 acres of the Scottish Highlands, and is Queen Elizabeth's favourite home. (R)

Prime Time

4.10 Sandringham: The Queen At Christmas What Christmas is like for the Royal Family on the Sandringham Estate.
5.15 A Royal Night Out (2015) Premiere. Comedy drama, starring Bel Powley and Sarah Gadon. ★★★
7.00 The Strictly Story: Fake Tan, Tangos & a 10 from Len The tale behind the popular celebrity dance contest, featuring contributions from popular past contestants as well as the show's judges and professional dancers and celebrity fans. (R)
8.30 Dirty Dancing: Making Movie Magic A 30th anniversary celebration of the movie phenomenon, revisiting favourite scenes, discovering what happened on set and hearing from the supporting cast and crew. (R)
10.00 Dirty Dancing (1987) A dance instructor at a 1960s resort teaches a naive teenager about self-expression as they perform in an important show. Romantic drama, with Patrick Swayze and Jennifer Grey. ★★★
12.00 Football on 5: The Championship Colin Murray introduces action from the Boxing Day games. **12.55 Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights** Highlights from the 11th round of matches. **1.45 SuperCasino** Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.05 Love/Hate** John Boy's deceit sparks a gang war. (R) **4.00 Now That's Funny!** Internet-sourced videos with an amusing family friendly hook. (R) **4.45 House Doctor** Highlights of the series. (R) **5.10 House Busters** A south London home. (R) **5.35 Wildlife SOS** (R)

Wednesday, December 27

Early View

BBC 1

Anya Taylor-Joy stars in The Miniaturist, on at 9.00pm

6.00 Breakfast News, entertainment and weather reports. **7.45 Match of the Day** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches. (R) **9.15 FILM: Turbo (2013)** Animated adventure, with the voice of Ryan Reynolds. ★★★ **10.45 FILM: The Princess and the Frog (2009)** ★★★ **12.15 Snow Bears** Documentary following polar bears travelling to the North Pole. (R) **1.15 BBC News** The latest national and international stories. **1.25 Midlands Today; Weather 1.35 Father Brown** Sid falls for the heiress to a local brewery. (R) **2.20 FILM: Shrek 2 (2004)** Animated adventure sequel, with the voice of Mike Myers. ★★★

BBC 2

Documentary about the early years, Oasis: Supersonic, 10.00pm

6.25 Sign Zone: Mary Berry's Country House Secrets Mary visits the March family at Goodwood House. (R) **7.25 Island Parish Shetland** (R) **7.55 FILM: Bears (2014)** Premiere. Documentary following a family of bears in Alaska. ★★★ **9.10 The Big Family Cooking Showdown** (R) **10.10 Nadiya's British Food Adventure** (R) **10.40 Nadiya's British Food Adventure** (R) **11.10 The Sweet Makers: A Georgian Treat** (R) **12.10 FILM: The Red Shoes (1948)** Powell and Pressburger's drama, starring Moira Shearer. ★★★★ **2.20 The World's Most Extraordinary Homes** Unusual homes built in mountainous regions of the world. (R)

ITV

Neil Dudgeon stars, Midsomer Murders, 1.00pm

6.00 CITV: Sooty. (R) **6.10 The Oddbods Show** (R) **6.15 Om Nom Stories** (R) **6.20 Super 4** (R) **6.35 Super 4** (R) **6.45 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R) **7.00 Mr Bean: The Animated Series** (R) **7.10 Horrid Henry** (R) **7.25 FILM: K-9 (1989)** Police comedy, starring James Belushi. ★★ **9.25 FILM: Twins (1988)** Comedy, with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito. ★★★ **11.25 Cannonball Christmas Special** (R) **12.25 You've Been Framed!** Judy Murray toughens up Andy by using him for target practice. **12.55 ITV Lunchtime News;** Weather. **12.58 Central News and Weather 1.00 Midsomer Murders** A man is stabbed to death during a ghost-hunting party. (R)

Ch4

Professor Noel treats a poorly penguin, The Supervet, on at 7.00pm

6.40 FILM: Short Circuit 2 (1988) A curious robot meets an old friend and sets off for an adventure in New York. Sci-fi comedy sequel, starring Fisher Stevens, with the voice of Tim Blaney. ★★ **8.40 Lego Masters** The hunt is on for the UK and Ireland's best Lego builders. (R) **9.40 The Simpsons** With the voice of Frances McDormand. (R) **10.10 The Simpsons** Groundskeeper Willie is forced to move in with the family. (R) **10.35 The Simpsons** Grampa becomes a matador. (R) **11.05 FILM: Small Soldiers (1998)** A computer chip brings a squad of toy soldiers to life, causing mayhem for their owner. Children's adventure, with Kirsten Dunst. ★★★ **1.15 FILM: Sunshine on Leith (2013)** Musical, starring George MacKay. ★★

Ch5

Most Shocking Celebrity Moments 2017, on at 9.00pm

6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 Cruising with Jane McDonald The presenter embarks on a series of ocean odysseys. (R) **9.30 World's Strongest Man 2017** Highlights of the World Tour Finals. **10.30 FILM: North Sea Hijack (1979)** Thriller, starring Roger Moore. ★★ **12.25 FILM: Operation Crossbow (1965)** Three engineers parachute into occupied Holland to destroy a missile base – but there is a traitor in their midst. Second World War adventure, with George Peppard and Sophia Loren. ★★★ **2.40 FILM: Operation: Daybreak (1975)** Fact-based Second World War drama about the killing of leading Nazi Reinhard Heydrich and the search for the assassins. Starring Timothy Bottoms. ★★★

Prime Time

3.45 The Gruffalo (R)
4.10 Big Hero 6 (2014) ★★★
5.45 Pointless (R)
6.30 BBC News
6.50 Midlands Today; Weather
7.00 Celebrity Mastermind New series. John Humphrys presents the first in a new series of the classic quiz show, as Jack Ashton, Rich Hall, Guy Mowbray and Pam Ayres face the famous black chair.
7.30 A Question of Sport: Premier League Special Sue Barker asks the questions in the light-hearted quiz, with Dion Dublin, Graeme Le Saux, Darren Bent and Alex Scott joining team captains Matt Dawson and Phil Tufnell.
8.00 Little Women The March sisters must fend for themselves at home as Marmee is preoccupied with caring for her ailing husband, but the girls face an insurmountable challenge as Beth falls ill.
9.00 The Miniaturist Two-part adaptation of Jessie Burton's best-selling novel set in 1686. In the second episode, Nella desperately tries to turn the fortunes of the Brandt household around.
10.00 BBC News at Ten
10.20 Midlands Today; Weather; National Lottery Update
10.30 Mrs Brown's Boys Christmas Special (R)
11.00 Not Going Out Christmas Special (R)
11.40 Comic Relief 2017: 'Twas the Thanks After Red Nose Day A compilation looking back at some of the highlights from the 2017 Comic Relief fundraising event, featuring a host of celebrities appearances and comedic routines.
12.40 Weather for the Week Ahead 12.45 BBC News

3.20 Inside the Factory (R)
4.20 The Man Who Never Was (1956) ★★
6.00 Thailand: Earth's Tropical Paradise (R)
7.00 Dad's Army Mainwaring finds himself bidding against Pike for an orange at a fundraising bazaar, but the private reveals a stubborn streak that costs the captain dear. (R)
7.30 Christmas University Challenge 2017 In the third match of the Christmas series, teams of university alumni from the University of York and University of Southampton compete.
8.00 Six Robots & Us A unique experiment exploring the latest innovations in robotics, to examine how useful robots can be in enhancing the lives of ordinary families.
9.00 Alan Partridge: Why, When, Where, How and Whom? Documentary celebrating 25 years of Steve Coogan's comic creation, featuring contributions from writers and co-stars and previously unseen rehearsal and improv footage.
10.00 Oasis: Supersonic (2016) Premiere. Documentary about the early years of the Manchester band, featuring concert footage and first-hand accounts of the sibling rivalry between Noel and Liam Gallagher. ★★★
11.55 NFL This Week Action from the 16th round of fixtures, which included Green Bay Packers v Minnesota Vikings, New Orleans Saints v Atlanta Falcons, and Philadelphia Eagles v Oakland Raiders.
12.45 Britpop at the BBC 1.45 Blur at Glastonbury (R) **2.45 Sign Zone: Joanna & Jennifer: Absolutely Champers** (R) **3.45 FILM: Sign Zone: Bill (2015)** ★★★

3.00 Tenable A team of five from Cornwall answers questions about top 10 lists. (R)
4.00 Tipping Point Game show, hosted by Ben Shephard. (R)
5.00 The Chase Quiz show, hosted by Bradley Walsh. (R)
6.00 Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs The comedian returns to Battersea Dogs & Cats Home in London, meeting a British bulldog with a leg problem and helping to wash a smelly English mastiff. (R)
6.30 ITV News Central; Weather.
6.45 ITV Evening News; Weather.
7.00 Emmerdale Zak enlists Faith's help in faking the paperwork to save the Dingle home, while Liv is delighted to see that Aaron and Alex are together.
7.30 Coronation Street Eileen tries to find out more about Billy's fall, Adam vows to get justice for his mum's death, and Alya discovers why new clients do not want to meet with her.
8.00 Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire (2005) The teenage wizard is chosen to represent Hogwarts School in a dangerous magical tournament. Fourth instalment of the fantasy saga, starring Daniel Radcliffe and Robert Pattinson. ★★★
10.50 ITV Evening News; Weather.
11.04 ITV Central Weather
11.05 Tina & Bobby Drama about footballer Bobby Moore's life with his childhood sweetheart Tina Dean, from their humble beginnings to superstardom. (R)
12.05 Get Shirty (R) **12.55 Jackpot247 3.00 May the Best House Win** (R)

3.10 Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny
4.15 Channel 4 News
4.30 Back to the Future Part II (1989) ★★★
6.30 Hollyoaks
7.00 The Supervet at Christmas Noel Fitzpatrick is called upon to help a Humboldt penguin chick that needs surgery on its foot. He also treats a cat with a mysterious swelling and a husky has a hip operation. (R)
8.00 Supershoppers Sales Special Anna Richardson and Sabrina Grant offer money-saving tips, and investigate some of the slashed prices and discounts from retailers that may not be all they seem.
9.00 Miranda Does Christmas A Christmas special hosted by comedian Miranda Hart, featuring a unique gospel choir performance, and a festive version of a Destiny's Child classic.
10.00 First Dates at Christmas The restaurant hosts a festive party as maitre d' Fred and his Christmas Cupids celebrate a year that has seen proposals, engagement rings and the show's very first baby. (R)
11.05 East Is East (1999) Two Asian teenagers in 1970s Salford are horrified when their traditionally minded father plans arranged marriages for them. Comedy drama, starring Om Puri and Jimi Mistry. ★★★
12.50 Very British Problems at Christmas (R) **1.45 That's So Last Century** (R) **2.35 Britain's Favourite Superhero** (R) **4.00 Location, Location, Location** (R) **4.55 Four in a Bed** (R) **5.20 Kirstie's Handmade Christmas** (R) **5.40 FILM: Holiday Inn (1942)** (b/w) ★★★

4.55 The Guns of Navarone (1961) Second World War adventure, starring Gregory Peck; ★★★ 5 News Update
8.00 World's Strongest Man 2017 Action from the opening heat in Botswana, which featured four former winners including defending champion Brian Shaw – targeting a record-equalling fifth title; 5 News Update
9.00 Most Shocking Celebrity Moments 2017 Memorable moments featuring famous faces from the past year, including David Beckham's leaked e-mails, a mishap at the Oscars, and Prue Leith's Great British Bake Off spoilers.
12.00 Blind Date Christmas Special A festive edition of the matchmaking show, in which Paul O'Grady gives a real-life Prince Charming a chance to find romance with either Cinderella, Snow White or Tinkerbell. (R) **1.00 SuperCasino** Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.05 Love/Hate** Trish gives birth on Christmas Eve, while Darren is delighted when Rosie returns to Dublin. However, John Boy is still at war with Fran – and orders Tommy to kill his rival. (R) **4.00 Cruising with Jane McDonald** The singer embarks on a series of ocean odysseys, beginning with a stop-off at Nassau in the Bahamas, where Jane finds solace in the state's oldest baptist church. (R) **4.45 House Doctor** Ann Maurice and Alistair Appleton present more highlights from the series, recalling a basement flat in north London desperately in need of tidying up. (R) **5.10 House Busters** (R) **5.35 Wildlife SOS** The team treats an owl that refuses to fly and a badger with life-threatening injuries, while Simon tries to free a deer that has become stuck in railings. (R)

Late View

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Thursday, December 28

BBC 1

Granville faces being left alone at Christmas, Still Open All Hours, 7.30pm

Early View

6.00 Breakfast A round-up of national and international news, plus current affairs, arts and entertainment, and weather. **9.00 FILM: The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists! (2012)** Animated comedy, with the voice of Hugh Grant. ★★★ **10.20 FILM: Kung Fu Panda (2008)** Animated comedy, with the voice of Jack Black. ★★★ **11.45 Bargain Hunt** Two teams test their antiques knowledge. (R) **12.45 BBC News at One; Weather 1.00 Midlands Today; Weather 1.05 Father Brown** The clerical sleuth encounters a voodoo priest. (R) **1.50 Revolting Rhymes** Part one of two. (R) **2.20 FILM: Shrek the Third (2007)** Animated sequel, with the voice of Mike Myers. ★★★

Prime Time

3.45 The Gruffalo's Child (R)
4.10 How to Train Your Dragon 2 (2014) ★★★
5.45 Pointless (R)
6.30 BBC News
6.45 Midlands Today; Weather
7.00 Celebrity Mastermind Antiques expert Philip Serrell, comedian and actor Richard McCourt, poet and presenter Lemn Sissay and Sports anchor Olivia Wayne compete.
7.30 Still Open All Hours New series. Granville faces being left alone at Christmas as all his friends and neighbours make plans to go away – leaving him at the amorous mercy of Mrs Featherstone.
8.00 EastEnders Fi breaks into Willmott-Brown's office to find out the truth about her father, while he tries to manipulate Kathy. Karen reaches out to her sister for financial help.
8.30 Little Women Jo feels snubbed when Amy is chosen over her to accompany Aunt Carroll's daughter on a tour of Europe, so she flees to New York to pursue her career. Last in the series.
9.30 EastEnders Fi is sickened to discover how low her family have sunk, Linda is hell-bent on finding another local pub to manage and Bernadette tells Kandice about the family's money troubles.
10.00 BBC News
10.15 Midlands Today
10.25 Bruno Mars: Live in Harlem
11.10 U2 at the BBC The band performs some of their biggest hits at Abbey Road Studios, alongside tracks from their latest album, Songs of Experience, and chat to Cat Deeley about their lives. (R)

Late View

12.25 Weather for the Week Ahead 12.30 BBC News

BBC 2

Steve Coogan stars, Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa, on at 11.30pm

Early View

6.45 Sign Zone: MasterChef: The Professionals (R) **7.45 FILM: Ray Harryhausen: Special Effects Titan (2011)** A tribute to the visual effects artist. ★★★ **9.15 The Big Family Cooking Showdown** (R) **10.15 Nadiya's British Food Adventure** (R) **10.45 Nadiya's British Food Adventure** (R) **11.15 The Sweet Makers: A Victorian Treat** (R) **12.15 FILM: Love Is a Many Splendored Thing (1955)** Fact-based romantic drama, with William Holden and Jennifer Jones. ★★ **1.55 Supercharged Otters: Natural World** Documentary following three orphaned river otters. (R) **2.55 The World's Most Extraordinary Homes** Unusual homes in forest regions around the world. (R)

Prime Time

3.55 Inside the Factory (R)
4.55 The Heroes of Telemark (1965) ★★★
7.00 Thailand: Earth's Tropical Paradise Exploring the forests, plains and cities of Central Thailand, and revealing how the nation's people find spiritual fulfilment in their relationships with animals. (R)
8.00 Christmas University Challenge 2017 Teams from the University of Leicester and UCL compete, with Paralympian Danielle Brown, Sky at Night presenter Pete Lawrence and the BBC's Jeremy Bowen among the contestants.
8.30 Six Robots & Us Part two of two. The experts deliver more robots to families around the UK, including a north London couple who receive a machine designed to help their autistic four-year-old.
9.30 Attenborough and the Empire of the Ants David Attenborough tells the story of two physically identical species of ant that have two very different strategies to survive the harsh environment of the Swiss Alps.
10.30 Romesh Ranganathan: Irrational Live The comedian's first-ever live stand-up show, in which the Bafta-nominated star takes shots at everyone from his children to a stranger in a coffee shop.
11.30 Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa (2013) The hapless local radio DJ ends up in the middle of a siege when a colleague responds to being fired by taking hostages. Comedy, starring Steve Coogan. ★★★

Late View

12.55 FILM: Oasis: Supersonic (2016) ★★★ **2.55 Sign Zone: Employable Me** (R)

ITV

Bradley Walsh hosts the quiz show, The Chase, on at 5.00pm

Early View

6.00 Good Morning Britain Shaun Williamson gives the lowdown on his appearance in Peter Pan, and Chris Packham talks about his dinosaur documentary The Real T. Rex. **8.30 Lorraine 9.25 FILM: Babe (1995)** A piglet dreams of being a champion sheepdog but several greedy humans are determined to see him end up on a dinner plate. Family comedy, with James Cromwell. ★★★★ **11.05 FILM: Black Beauty (1994)** Family drama, starring Sean Bean. ★★★ **12.45 ITV Lunchtime News 12.55 ITV News Central 1.00 Midsomer Murders** As Midsomer St Claire prepares for storms and flooding, it appears a murderer is using ancient torture methods to punish modern-day "sinners". (R)

Prime Time

3.00 Tenable Quiz, hosted by Warwick Davis. (R)
4.00 Tipping Point Game show, hosted by Ben Shephard. (R)
5.00 The Chase Quiz show, hosted by Bradley Walsh. (R)
6.00 Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs The comedian tries to train three huge puppies that spent the first five months of their lives being raised by a homeless man, and sets out to reunite a Jack Russell with its owner. (R)
6.30 ITV News Central; Weather.
6.45 ITV Evening News; Weather.
7.00 Emmerdale Rebecca confesses her plans, Jimmy and Nicola receive a tempting offer, and Bernice prepares for her date.
8.00 Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (2007) The wizard forms his fellow pupils into a secret army to battle the resurrected Lord Voldemort. Fantasy adventure sequel, starring Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson and Gary Oldman. ★★★
10.35 ITV News; Weather.
10.54 ITV Central Weather
10.55 Tina & Bobby The West Ham player leads England to World Cup glory at Wembley and fame and fortune follow, as the couple become icons of their time. Lorne MacFadyen and Michelle Keegan star. (R)
11.55 Stuck on You: The Football Sticker Story How four Italian brothers took a childhood obsession and turned it into a worldwide industry – and the British upstarts who took on the mighty Panini to beat them at their own game. (R)

Late View

12.45 Jackpot247 3.00 Tenable (R) **3.50 ITV Nightscreen**

Ch4

Joel confides in Sienna about his feelings, Hollyoaks, on at 6.30pm

Early View

7.20 FILM: The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie (2004) Children's animated comedy, with the voice of Tom Kenny. ★★★ **8.55 Lego Masters** The teams compete in two challenges on the theme of movement. (R) **10.00 The Simpsons** Marge joins the local police academy. (R) **10.30 The Simpsons** Homer gets a new wife. With the voice of Ricky Gervais. (R) **11.00 FILM: Spy Kids 4: All the Time in the World (2011)** Two children learn their stepmother is a secret agent and help her battle an evil genius with the power to control time. Family adventure, starring Jessica Alba and Jeremy Piven. ★★ **12.45 FILM: The Net (1995)** Thriller, with Sandra Bullock and Jeremy Northam. ★★

Prime Time

3.00 Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny
4.00 Channel 4 News
4.20 Back to the Future Part III (1990) ★★★
6.30 Hollyoaks
7.00 We're Going on a Bear Hunt Animated adventure based on Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury's popular children's story, featuring the voices of Olivia Colman, Pam Ferris and Mark Williams. (R)
7.30 The Secret Life of the Zoo at Christmas Chester Zoo's keepers are busy making gifts for all the animals, and it is a chaotic free-for-all when the festive parcels are handed over to the chimps. (R)
8.30 The Secret Life of 5 Year Olds on Holiday One-off special in which familiar faces from the observational series are shown away from the classroom as they and their families jet off to the Sunwing resort in Cyprus.
9.00 What Britain Bought in 2017 Mary Portas surveys Britain's spending habits over the past 12 months, and looks back at some of the retail stories, such as the popularity of Prosecco and the fidget spinner.
10.00 The Undateables at Christmas Familiar faces from the dating show share their extra special plans for the festive season, with Daniel from Brighton busy planning the release of his latest single. (R)
11.05 About a Boy (2002) A womaniser who poses as a father to meet single women changes his ways after befriending a lonely youngster. Romantic comedy, with Hugh Grant, Toni Collette and Nicholas Hoult. ★★★

Late View

12.55 Alan Carr's Christmas Chatty Man (R) **2.50 Paul O'Grady's 100 Years of Movie Musicals** (R)

Ch5

Action from the second heat, World's Strongest Man 2017, on at 8.00pm

Early View

6.00 Milkshake! 9.15 Cruising with Jane McDonald Highlights of Jane's tour of Alaska, America's largest state. (R) **9.30 The Gadget Show** (R) **10.25 FILM: The 7th Voyage of Sinbad (1958)** Fantasy adventure, with Kerwin Mathews. ★★★ **12.15 FILM: The Vikings (1958)** A Norse warrior fights to claim the Northumbrian throne, unaware his rival for the crown is really his half-brother. Adventure, with Kirk Douglas, Tony Curtis and Janet Leigh. ★★★★ **2.30 FILM: Jason and the Argonauts (1963)** The son of an overthrown king battles monsters during an epic voyage in search of a magical golden fleece. Fantasy adventure, with Todd Armstrong and Honor Blackman. ★★★

Prime Time

4.30 André Rieu: My Life in Music Profile of the Dutch violinist. (R)
6.00 Andre Rieu: Christmas in London A festive concert by the Dutch violinist and the Johann Strauss Orchestra, featuring carols as well as songs including Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah and the Concierto de Aranjuez. (R)
7.00 Winter in Alaska Documentary following four seasons in the north American state, beginning with winter, where snowfall is measured in feet rather than inches; (R) 5 News Update
8.00 World's Strongest Man 2017 Action from the second heat in Botswana, which featured Iceland's Hafthor Julius Bjornsson, a man who has stood on the podium five times but has never been crowned champion; 5 News Tonight
9.00 Flight (2012) Premiere. A pilot is hailed as a hero for bringing a malfunctioning plane down safely – until it emerges he was drunk at the controls. Drama, with Denzel Washington and Don Cheadle. ★★★
11.45 The Taking of Pelham 123 (2009) Criminals hijack a crowded New York subway train and threaten to kill the passengers unless they are paid $10million. Thriller remake, with Denzel Washington and John Travolta. ★★★

Late View

1.45 SuperCasino Live interactive gaming. **3.05 Love/Hate** The gang members' lives spiral out of control. (R) **4.00 Cruising with Jane McDonald** A Lilliputian lope round the Inner Hebrides puts Jane in touch with her Scottish roots. (R) **4.45 House Doctor** A slightly neglected 200-year-old cottage. (R) **5.10 House Busters** (R) **5.35 Wildlife SOS** (R)

Friday, December 29

BBC 1

Rob Brydon hosts the comedy panel show, Would I Lie to You? 8.30pm

6.00 Breakfast News, entertainment and weather reports. **9.00 FILM: Monsters vs Aliens (2009)** Animated sci-fi comedy, with the voice of Reese Witherspoon. ★★★ **10.25 Shaun the Sheep: The Farmer's Llamas** (R) **10.55 FILM: Kung Fu Panda 2 (2011)** Animated comedy sequel, with the voice of Jack Black. ★★★ **12.15 Bargain Hunt** From Builth Wells, Powys. (R) **12.45 BBC News at One; Weather 1.00 Midlands Today; Weather 1.10 Father Brown** The priest investigates the murder of a B-movie director. (R) **1.55 Revolting Rhymes** The second of two animations based on Roald Dahl's children's book. (R) **2.25 FILM: Up (2009)** Animated adventure, with the voice of Ed Asner. ★★★★

BBC 2

Frankie Boyle's 2017 New Year World Order, on at 10.00pm

6.35 Sign Zone: MasterChef: The Professionals Challenges include making a fruit-based dessert. (R) **7.35 FILM: G-Force (2009)** Children's adventure, starring Bill Nighy. ★★ **8.55 The Big Family Cooking Showdown** (R) **9.55 Nadiya's British Food Adventure** (R) **10.25 Nadiya's British Food Adventure** (R) **10.55 Puerto Rico – Island of Enchantment: Natural World** (R) **11.55 FILM: Three Coins in the Fountain (1954)** Romantic drama, starring Dorothy McGuire. ★★★ **1.35 Nature's Weirdest Events** The town brought to a standstill by a swarm of flying insects. (R) **2.05 The World's Most Extraordinary Homes** A house in Canada inspired by two ships in dry dock. (R)

ITV

Warwick Davis hosts the quiz show, Tenable, on at 3.00pm

6.00 Good Morning Britain Ventriloquist and America's Got Talent winner Paul Zerdin talks about his stint in panto. Plus, news and current affairs, plus health, entertainment and lifestyle features. **8.30 Lorraine** Entertainment and fashion news. **9.25 Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury** The presenter ventures towards Cumbria's High Cup Nick. (R) **9.50 FILM: Everything or Nothing: The Untold Story of 007 (2012)** Documentary about the making of the James Bond films. ★★★ **11.45 Bond Girls Are Forever** The thrill of being a Bond girl. (R) **12.45 ITV Lunchtime News;** Weather. **12.55 ITV News Central;** Weather. **1.00 Midsomer Murders** A man is mauled to death by a wild boar. (R)

Ch4

Ashley Jensen guests, Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast, on at 8.00pm

7.05 FILM: Black Nativity (2013) Musical, starring Jacob Latimore. ★★★ **8.50 Lego Masters** The teams compete in two challenges on the theme of nature. (R) **9.50 The Simpsons** Bart develops a sense of civic pride. (R) **10.20 The Simpsons** Springfield gets a new telephone code. (R) **10.50 The Simpsons** Homer and Marge dispense marital advice. (R) **11.15 FILM: Hotel for Dogs (2009)** An orphaned brother and sister in foster care transform an abandoned hotel into luxury accommodation for stray dogs. Family comedy, with Emma Roberts, Jake T Austin and Don Cheadle. ★★★ **1.20 FILM: Cutthroat Island (1995)** Swashbuckling adventure, with Geena Davis. ★★

Ch5

Action from the third heat, World's Strongest Man 2017, on at 8.00pm

6.00 Milkshake! 9.00 FILM: Arthur 2: On the Rocks (1988) The drunken millionaire is bankrupt, while his wife wants to have a baby and pushes him into taking responsibility for once. Comedy sequel, with Dudley Moore and Liza Minnelli. ★ **11.10 FILM: Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (1988)** Two rival conmen on the French Riviera make a wager over who will be the first to trick a glamorous heiress out of her fortune. Comedy, starring Michael Caine and Steve Martin. ★★★ **1.20 FILM: Labyrinth (1986)** A teenager travels through a magical maze to rescue her baby brother from a band of goblins and their sinister king. Fantasy adventure, starring Jennifer Connelly and David Bowie. ★★★

Early View

Prime Time

3.50 Room on the Broom (R)
4.20 Brave (2012) ★★★
5.45 Pointless (R)
6.30 BBC News at Six; Weather
6.45 Midlands Today; Weather
7.00 Celebrity Mastermind Actor John Bradley, hockey player Crista Cullen, Radio 1Xtra presenter Nick Bright and Hollyoaks actress Anna Passey compete in the specialist and general knowledge quiz.
7.30 Tim Vine Travels Through Time Christmas Special Tim journeys back in time to Tudor England in a quest to find a silver lion and bring Christmas to Henry VIII's court. Comedy, guest starring Emma Bunton and the Rev Richard Coles.
8.00 EastEnders Mick has to decide whether he is part of Aidan's gang, Carmel and Shakil put paid to Kush and Denise's hopes of a quiet night in, and the Vic regulars see the year out with a bang.
8.30 Would I Lie to You? Rob Brydon hosts the comedy panel show, with Steve Davis, Craig Parkinson, Sara Pascoe and Claudia Winkleman joining team captains David Mitchell and Lee Mack.
9.00 BBC News
9.10 Midlands Today; Weather; National Lottery Update
9.15 Gone Girl (2014) Premiere. A man reports his wife's disappearance, only to end up under media scrutiny and accused of murder. David Fincher's crime thriller, with Ben Affleck. ★★★
11.40 Michael McIntyre's Big Christmas Show The comedy star concludes his entertainment showcase with a festive special. (R)
12.45 Weather for the Week Ahead **12.50** BBC News

3.05 Inside the Factory (R)
4.05 The Desert Fox (1951) (b/w) ★★★
5.30 Thailand: Earth's Tropical Paradise (R)
6.30 Christmas University Challenge 2017
7.00 Morecambe & Wise: Leading Ladies Penelope Keith presents a compilation of highlights from the comedy duo's shows featuring appearances by female stars of stage and screen. (R)
8.00 Eric & Ernie's Home Movies Footage of Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise's home movies, chronicling their rise to fame as well as recording key moments in their private lives.
9.00 Vic & Bob's Big Night Out Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer present an updated version of Vic Reeves Big Night Out, featuring new and old characters and a healthy dose of slapstick humour.
9.30 Live at the Apollo Katherine Ryan hosts a festive instalment from the stage of London's Hammersmith Apollo, featuring Marlon Davis, Joel Dommett and John Robbins. Last in the series.
10.00 Frankie Boyle's 2017 New Year World Order The comedian tries to make sense of the past 12 months.
10.30 QI XL With Jason Manford, Romesh Ranganathan and Holly Walsh.
11.15 The Great Gatsby (2013) A naive writer befriends a decadent millionaire and slowly uncovers the dark underside of his lavish lifestyle. Period drama, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Tobey Maguire. ★★★
1.35 Sign Zone: Doctor Who (R) **2.35** FILM: Sign Zone: Cinderella (2015) ★★★ **4.30** This Is BBC Two

3.00 Tenable A team of five from Merseyside answers questions. Last in the series. (R)
4.00 Tipping Point Game show, hosted by Ben Shephard. (R)
5.00 The Chase Quiz show, hosted by Bradley Walsh. (R)
6.00 Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs A puppy is rushed to the clinic when an injury comes to light just days after arriving at Battersea, while Paul pampers a Yorkshire terrier that has been given up by its owner. (R)
6.30 ITV News Central; Weather.
6.45 ITV Evening News; Weather.
7.00 Emmerdale The Dingles get ready, and Bernice makes arrangements.
7.30 Coronation Street Roy begs Carla not to return to Devon and to move in with him instead, and Adam offers to help Geraldine get Summer taken away from Todd and Billy.
8.00 Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (2009) The wizard must uncover the secrets of Lord Voldemort's past to try to end the evil sorcerer's reign of terror. Fantasy adventure sequel, with Daniel Radcliffe and Michael Gambon. ★★★
10.50 ITV News; Weather.
11.09 ITV Central Weather
11.10 Tina & Bobby The former England star winds up managing a lowly non-league side, and Tina dismisses rumours he's having an affair – until her worst fears are confirmed. Last in the series. (R)
12.10 Bear's Mission with Rob Brydon (R) **1.05** Jackpot247 Interactive gaming. **3.00** 100 Year Old Drivers (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen Text-based information service.

3.40 Four Rooms with Sarah Beeny Items include a Second World War Tommy Gun.
4.45 Channel 4 News
5.00 The Simpsons Lisa joins a group of eco-radicals. (R)
5.30 The Simpsons Mr Burns hires Homer to play pranks. (R)
6.00 Hollyoaks Tom celebrates his birthday at The Loft.
7.00 Travel Man: 48 Hours in Hong Kong Richard Ayoade is joined by actor Jon Hamm, star of Mad Men and Baby Driver, for a Yuletide trek around Hong Kong – the most visited and most vertical city on the planet. (R)
8.00 Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast Jamie Oliver and Jimmy Doherty are joined by Ashley Jensen, who learns to make authentic Umbrian pasta with truffle. Jimmy also helps the RNLI create the perfect fundraising feast.
9.00 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown Christmas Special Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show's version of the words and numbers quiz, with Jon Richardson and Catherine Tate teaming up against Sean Lock and Joe Wilkinson.
10.00 Gogglebox 2017 Highlights from the most recent series, featuring the armchair critics' reactions to The Crystal Maze, the Weakest Link Celebrity Special, and Mary Berry's Country House Secrets. (R)
12.05 FILM: I Give It a Year (2013) ★★★ **1.55** FILM: The River Wild (1994) ★★★ **3.50** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (R) **4.35** Four in a Bed (R) **5.00** Jamie's Cracking Christmas (R) **5.15** FILM: The Three Musketeers (1973) ★★★

3.20 Look Who's Talking (1989) Comedy, starring Kirstie Alley. ★★★
5.10 Footloose (1984) Drama, starring Kevin Bacon. ★★★
7.00 Winter in Yorkshire As winter takes its toll, cameras follow grey seal pups at Ravenscar beach, and the progress of many short-eared owls that land on the moors; (R) 5 News Update
8.00 World's Strongest Man 2017 Action from the third heat in Botswana, which featured six tasks including the 15-tonne Bus Pull, the 350kg Dead Lift and the 200kg Elephant Carry; 5 News Update
9.00 Victoria Wood By Her Friends Profile of the writer and comedian, featuring clips of some of the funniest performances of her 40-year career and contributions from friends, fans and co-stars.
10.00 Victoria Wood: Live 1997 The comedian performs stand-up and sketches, recorded during Victoria's 1997 tour and acclaimed as one of the very best stand-up shows of the decade. (R)
12.00 SuperCasino Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.05 Love/Hate** Nidge seizes his opportunity to take control of the gang and sets about getting his cohorts back to business and Mary discovers the extent of Luke's obsession. Last in the series. (R) **4.00 Winter in Alaska** Documentary following four seasons in the north American state, beginning with winter, where snowfall is measured in feet rather than inches. (R) **4.45 House Doctor** A bachelor pad in Knutsford, Cheshire. (R) **5.10 House Busters** Life-enhancing changes to a home. (R) **5.35 Wildlife SOS** The work of volunteers at an animal sanctuary. (R)

Late View

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Theatre has planned a Grand 2018

They got rhythm – Tom Chambers and Charlotte Wakefield in the George and Ira Gershwin musical Crazy For You

Dancing Queens and Super Troupers will be heading to Wolverhampton Grand for the big ABBA hits in Mamma Mia!

Natural Woman – Bronté Barbé plays singer-songwriter Carole King in the acclaimed show about her life, Beautiful

In two minds – gothic horror as Phil Daniels plays Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

PANTO season is in full swing but Wolverhampton Grand Theatre has already planned a bumper 2018 of top shows, including a new thriller, fresh adaptations of classics and the return of some old favourites.

Jack And The Beanstalk continues the family fun until January 14. Then the Grand gets the new year off to a dramatic start with the premiere of Ruth Rendell thriller Gallowglass (written as Barbara Vine) a story about a child's kidnapping and obsession. It's at the Wolverhampton theatre from January 18 to 20.

The National Theatre's production of Henrick Ibsen's Hedda Gabler, given a modern makeover by award-winning playwright Patrick Marber, visits January 23-27. The late 19th century masterpiece tells of the original desperate housewife, the conflicted Hedda, a woman caught in a loveless marriage. It is a powerful role for Lizzy Watts, who had a part in TV's The Durrells as Larry's girlfriend Nancy.

Spine-tingling ghost story The Turn Of The Screw, adapted from Henry James' novel by Tim Luscombe, is on from April 10 to 14, then another classic tale of terror stars Quadrophenia actor Phil Daniels as Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, May 1 to 5.

Grand musical highlights include blockbuster ABBA musical Mamma Mia! resident for three weeks, from February 6 to 24. Fans of can say Good Morning Baltimore again when Hairspray returns (February 26-March 3), and Willy Russell's Blood Brothers makes a comeback April 16-21.

A top-notch cast, spectacular staging and great Gershwin tunes combine to make Crazy For You, with Tom 'Strictly' Chambers, Claire Sweeney and Charlotte Wakefield, one of the most eagerly-awaited shows of the year, on from May 8 to 12.

Joe Pasquale steps into the shoes of Michael Crawford as the accident-prone Frank Spencer in a new stage version of Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em, based on the classic 70s TV sit-com.

June is musical month with Beautiful the acclaimed Carole King Musical, with Bronté Barbé as the US hitmaker, coming to the Grand (12-16) as part of its first UK tour after West End success.

Then Hayley Tamaddon (so good in the touring version of Chicago) stars in the 1920s-set flapper musical Thoroughly Modern Millie (26-30).

The Jersey Boys are working their way back to Wolverhampton to bring the music of The Four Seasons from August 28 to September 8. The recent West End favourite Kinky Boots struts its stuff at the Grand from October 16 to 27.

And, by the way, is you are eager for further panto magic next year – the Grand has already announced that next festive season's panto is Sleeping Beauty, and tickets are available now.

For further details about these shows and many more, including one-nighters and amateur productions, see grandtheatre.co.uk or call 01902 429212.

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By Jack Evans

This is Hyundai's new hot-hatch – the i30 N. Aiming to tackle the likes of the Volkswagen Golf GTI and Honda Civic Type R, it's the South Korean manufacturer's first foray into the ever-growing sports hatchback segment.

There's a lot going on underneath the skin of the i30 N, but it all works together to make it as competitive as possible in what is a very fought over segment.

Under the bonnet sits a turbocharged 2.0-litre petrol engine producing 271bhp and 353Nm of torque. The regular i30 N, which does without the clever differential or added exhaust trickery, makes do with 'just' 247bhp. In this case, we've been driving the more powerful version, capable of hitting 60mph in 5.9 seconds before hitting a top speed of 155mph.

A key part of the i30 N's armament is its Drive Mode selector. This allows you to cycle through various drive settings, with each changing the car a surprising amount. More importantly, it allows you to set up the car to your individual tastes. Usefully for the UK, it allows you to slacken off the suspension yet keep the car's engine and exhaust in their sportiest modes – ideal for pothole-ridden British b-roads.

Up and running, the i30 N gets better and better

Sit behind the wheel of the i30 N and, in truth, you could believe that you were sat in pretty much any other Hyundai product. You get the sense that the money has been spent on making the car drive well and, thankfully, that's exactly what it does.

Press the engine starter button and you're met by a cackle from the exhaust – immediately a good sign. The major control weights are well-judged; pulling away from a stop requires little management of the relatively light clutch, while the gearbox – which uses the same housing as the i40 – is notchy and simple to operate. The fundamentals, therefore, are solid.

Up and running, the i30 N simply gets better and better. The steering is accurate and allows you to easily place the car, and this is matched by an engine that offers more than enough low-down grunt.

We'd argue that, with its variety of small exterior additions, the i30 N is one of the best looking cars in the hot hatch segment. Additional air vents and a large rear diffuser help the car stand out just enough without shouting too loudly about it.

As mentioned previously, the interior of the N isn't wildly different to that in the regular i30. There are just enough features to keep it feeling special, though. The plastics surrounding the window switches are scratchy – though we are being picky here.

Save for a few additional steering wheel buttons – most notably the drive mode selectors – it's as you'd expect from the regular i30 N. Key elements have been changed however; the metal gear stick is exclusive to the i30 N, as are the sports pedals.

The i30 N's price tag is worth remembering at this point – prices for the Performance model start at £27,995, so it's never going to feel completely premium.

Whereas other manufacturers offer customers a wealth of optional extras to choose from, Hyundai has decided to keep things simple. You're able to pick pearl paint for £585 – and that's it. Despite this, you still get a full infotainment system with eight-inch colour touchscreen as standard, as well as Apple Car Play and Android Auto. There's also a five-year unlimited mileage warranty – and this covers track use, too.

With only a relatively young motorsport program and no production performance car heritage to speak of, you could have forgiven Hyundai for producing somewhat of a damp squib for its first hot hatch. However, this really couldn't be further from the truth – the i30 N is a hugely capable car available for an impressively competitive price. In short, we'd think long and hard about going for a Golf GTI – the i30 N is the complete package, and one of the best hatches on sale today.

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14/64 Seat Leon Est 1.6 TDi 105 SE DSG	£8,799
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14/14 VW Golf Est 1.6 TDI 105 SE Nav	£9,499
12/62 Audi Q3 2.0 TDI 140 Quattro S Line	£15,299
14/64 Ford EcoSp 1.5 TDCi T X Pk	£10,999
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30th Dec:	9am - 6pm
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2nd Jan:	9am - 8pm

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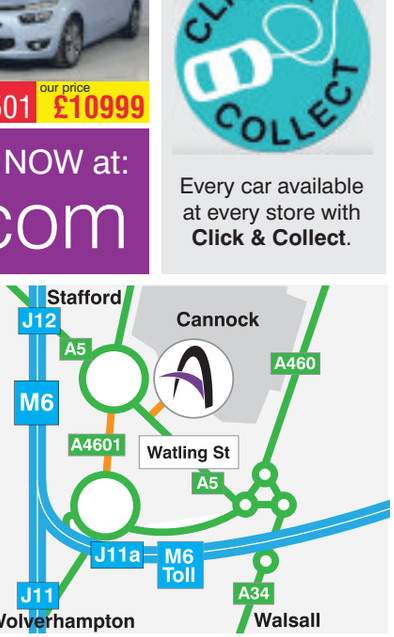

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THE BIG SALE

Starts Wednesday December 27th 10am

SAVE UP TO £4600 OFF NEW FORD STOCK MODELS

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INCLUDING: ALL - NEW FIESTA, FOCUS, B-MAX, C-MAX, S-MAX, MONDEO, RANGER, GALAXY AND FORD EDGE

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AN EXTRA £500 OFF ANY NEW FORD

This Voucher is worth £500 when you purchase between December 27th 2017 and Sunday January 7th 2018
Offers subject to stock availability, terms and conditions

- **Up to £4600 Off Stock vehicles**
- **3 years 0% APR Finance available^**

Call Acorn Ford now to make an appointment and get our best possible new Ford deal during the Christmas/New Year holiday period only,

BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT NOW

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OPENING TIMES 2017/18

		Sales	Parts & Service
Friday 22 Dec	2017	09.00 - 18.00	08.00 - 18.00
Saturday 23 Dec	2017	10.00 - 16.00	CLOSED
Sunday 24 Dec	2017	CLOSED	CLOSED
Monday 25 Dec	2017	CLOSED	CLOSED
Tuesday 26 Dec	2017	CLOSED	CLOSED
Wednesday 27 Dec	2017	09.00 - 18.00	08.00 - 18.00
Thursday 28 Dec	2017	09.00 - 18.00	08.00 - 18.00
Friday 29 Dec	2017	09.00 - 18.00	08.00 - 18.00
Saturday 30 Dec	2017	10.00 - 16.00	CLOSED
Sunday 31 Dec	2017	CLOSED	CLOSED
Monday 01 Jan	2018	CLOSED	CLOSED
Tuesday 02 Jan	2018	09.00 - 18.00	08.00 - 18.00

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Retail only. Subject to availability. Prices & details correct at time of publishing & are subject to change without notice. ^Finance subject to status to UK residents aged 18 or over. Guarantees/indemnities may be required. An Excess Mileage Charge will be payable if you decide to return the vehicle & the agreed annual mileage has been exceeded. Please note calls may be recorded for training & quality purposes. Acorn Group Ltd are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority as a credit broker but not as a lender. Details correct at time of publication, E&OE.

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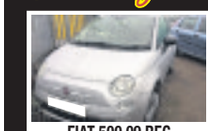
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Kia plug-in hybrids win two top green awards

Kia Motors (UK) Ltd. is delighted to announce two wins at the Next Green Car Awards 2017, with the all-new Niro Plug-in Hybrid (PHEV) winning in the crossover category and the all-new Optima Sportswagon PHEV winning in the estate category.

Both launched this year, the Niro and Optima Sportswagon PHEVs are another big step towards Kia's aim of reducing the average CO2 emissions of its entire range by 25 per cent, by 2020.

The Niro PHEV can drive for up to 36 miles on electric power alone, whilst the Optima Sportswagon PHEV can travel for up to 38 miles in all-electric mode.

Next Green Car commented: "Kia is one of the market leaders in terms of PHEV electric range, and the Niro Plug-In Hybrid benefits from this focus.

"Throw in the fact that the PHEV technology is wrapped up in practical crossover packaging, and the Niro Plug-In Hybrid is expected to quickly climb the electric vehicle sales charts. For those wanting value-for-money motoring, practicality, and a plug-in powertrain, the Optima Sportswagon Plug-In Hybrid is one of the best options around.

"With a long electric range and load-lugging potential, Kia's Optima estate opens up PHEV models to many buyers that need a large car but with low running costs."

Kia's all-new Optima Sportswagen PHEV won the estate category

The wins this year follow on from a very successful Next Green Car Awards 2016, where the Optima PHEV was victorious in the Large Family Car segment. In this year's shortlist, the Picanto has also been commended in the City Car category.

Steve Hicks, UK sales director at Kia, said: "We are thrilled to have received these awards from Next Green Car.

"The Niro PHEV and Optima Sportswagon PHEV are great additions to both the Kia fleet and the ever-growing UK alternative fuel market.

"Having this choice of Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles within the Kia range has enabled us to better meet our customers' changing needs – it's a very exciting time for Kia."

The Next Green Car Awards recognises the very best green cars that are currently and soon-to-be available.

The judging is based on a number of factors, but is focused on the Next Green Car (NGC) rating, based upon real-world emissions data. This ultimately aids the judges in identifying the greenest models available.

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62 208 1.6 HDI ACTIVE

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56 JAG XJ 2.7 AUTO

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13 FIESTA 1.5 DCI IN WHITE, Alloys, A/C, S/H, £0 Tax, 67,000 miles £6295
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11 C3 1.4 HDI VTR + Alloys, A/C, S/H £20 Tax, 49,000 miles £4995
10 ASTRA 1.6 SRi 5-dr, Alloys, A/C, B/Tooth, RCL, S/H, 61,000 miles £4995
62 C1 1.0 VTR+ Alloys, A/C, RCL, S/H, £0 Tax, 29,000 miles..... £4495
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61 MICRA 1.2 ACENTA, Alloys, AC, SH, £30 Tax, 40,000 miles..... £4495
61 C3 PICASSO 1.6 HDi, Alloys, A/C, S/H, £30 Tax, 71,000 miles £4495
62 107 ACTIVE 5DR IN BLUE, RCL, EW, SH, AC, £0 Tax, 26,000 miles £4295
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Offers subject to stock availability, terms and conditions

- Up to £3000 Off Stock vehicles
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- 4.9% APR Finance available^

Call Acorn Kia now to make an appointment and get our best possible new Kia deal during the Christmas/New Year holiday period only.

BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT NOW

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OPENING TIMES 2017/18

		Sales	Parts & Service
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Sunday 24 Dec	2017	CLOSED	CLOSED
Monday 25 Dec	2017	CLOSED	CLOSED
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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the Kia range of vehicles are between Urban: 29.1 (9.7) – 80.7 (3.5), Extra-Urban: 46.3 (6.1) – 94.2 (3.0) and Combined: 38.2 (7.4) – 88.3 (3.2). The official CO2 emissions for the Kia range of vehicles are between 85 - 189g/km.

MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Pictures for illustration purposes only and models shown may not be to UK specification. ^Kia Motors Finance RH1 1SR. You will not own the vehicle until all payments are made. T&C's apply. Subject to status. 18s or over. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. *All offers subject to stock availability, terms and conditions. Details correct at time of publication, E&OE.

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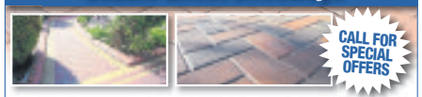

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Deaths

CHESTERS

Norman

Passed away December 10, 2017 at County Hospital, Stafford, after a short illness.

He will be very sadly missed by his loving Wife Christine, Sons Allan and Graham, Daughters-in-law Dawn and Barbara and Granddaughter Hayley.

Funeral Service to take place 12 noon, on Wednesday, December 27, 2017 at Stafford Crematorium.

By request Family flowers only.

Donations for Rheumatoid Arthritis may be sent c/o

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01889 582315

JONES

Evelyn Mary

Sadly passed away on Tuesday, December 5, 2017, aged 93 years.

Evelyn was much loved and will be missed dearly by all of her Family and Friends.

The Funeral Service will take place on Wednesday, December 27, 2017, at Stafford Crematorium, at 2pm.

Family flowers only please.

Donations, if so desired for Leukemia and Lymphoma Research.

All inquiries c/o

A.J. Sellman

Family Funeral Directors

59 Church Street, Cannock, WS11 1DH

01543 502322

DYKE

Beryl

Grandma

Sadly passed away at home on December 9, 2017 aged 86 with her Family by her side.

Dearly loved Mom of Julie, Tracey and Mick, she will be sadly missed by all her loving Grandchildren, Great-Grandchildren and Family.

May the winds of Heaven blow softly and whisper in your ear, how much we love and miss you and wish that you were here.

God bless.

Funeral at 2pm, Thursday, December 21, at St James the Great, Longdon, WS15 4PS.

Family flowers only.

Donations if desired to Soi Dog Foundation c/o

Pritchard a Griffiths Cyf.,

Dublin Street,

Porthmadog,

LL49 9RH.

MITCHELL

Cecil

Of School Court, Hednesford, formerly of Norton Canes.

Passed away peacefully on December 9, aged 91 years.

Will be missed by all Family and Friends.

Funeral Service will take place at St James' Church, Norton Canes on Wednesday, December 27 at 12 noon, followed by Interment in the Churchyard.

Inquiries to

Stacey's

Family Funeral Directors

30 Greenheath Road Hednesford, WS12 4AR

01543 422524

PADMORE

Derek

Peacefully at home on December 9, Derek Padmore, aged 89, only Son of the late Daisy and James (Jim) Padmore, once of Queens Road, Calf Heath.

PARKES

Anthea

Passed away peacefully at home surrounded by her loving Family, on December 9, 2017, aged 77 years.

Anthea will be sadly missed by all.

Funeral Service will take place on Thursday, December 28, 2017, at St. Mark's Church, Great Wyrley, at 12.15pm, followed by Committal at Bushbury Crematorium.

Family flowers only.

Donations will be gratefully accepted for The Alzheimer's Society.

Inquiries to

Halliwell

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Telephone 01922 419090

STANLEY

Dennis

Passed away peacefully on December 10, 2017, after a short illness, aged 95 years.

Loving Dad and Grandad.

He will be sadly missed.

The Fuenral Service will take place at Stafford Crematorium on Friday, December 22, 2017, at 10.40am.

Family flowers only.

Donations if desired would be accepted for The Air Ambulance.

All inquiries c/o

A.J. Sellman

Family Funeral Directors

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01785 715840

WALTON

Roy Neville

Of Rugeley.

Sadly passed away December 7, aged 79 years.

A very special man who was loved by all his Family and Friends.

His Funeral Service took place 10am, Wednesday, December 20, at Stafford Crematorium.

Donations would be appreciated for Air Ambulance c/o

A.J. Sellman

Family Funeral Directors

59 Church Street, Cannock, WS11 1DH

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WEBB

Kathryn Allison

Passed away peacefully December 8, 2017, surrounded by her loving Family at County Hospital Stafford, aged 44.

She will be very sadly missed by Mom Jude, Dad David, Sisters Marie, Lucy and all Family and Friends.

Funeral Service to take place 1.20pm on Friday, December 29, 2017, at Stafford Crematorium.

By request Family flowers only donations to be advised.

Further inquiries may be made to

The co-operative funeralcare

17 Brereton Road, Rugeley, Staffs, WS15 1BN

01889 582315

In Memoriam

AINGER

Aaron

Our wonderful Son

April 07, 1988 to December 27, 2008.

If we could have one more lifetime wish, one dream that could come true, we'd ask with all our hearts, for yesterday and you.

Aaron, we love and miss you every second of every day, that love will bind us for eternity.

Love, Mum and Jed.

Our Brother

Nine years without you.

It has and never will be the same. It feels like a lifetime since we got to tell you we love you.

Christmas is not Christmas without you.

Always in our hearts, little big man.

Love you always, Merry Christmas.

Love, Elise and Theo.

December 27.

You are not just a memory, or part of the past, you are ours to remember as long as life lasts.

A bond so strong it will not go away because we love and miss you more each day.

Love, brokenhearted Nan and Grandad Till.

X X

His light shines on.

HAWKINS

Reginald James

December 11, 2014.

Missed so much.

Our thoughts are always with you.

From all the Family.

Christmas Remembrances

PARKER

Brenda Jean

A Christmas we cannot share but in my heart you are still there.

To Heaven I send a Christmas kiss, to a love I sadly miss.

Miss you loads.

Chris.

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Acknowledgements

ROTCHELL

Daisy May

nee Belcher

Sue and Families, would like to say thank you for the messages and card received on the sad loss of our Auntie and to everyone who attended her Service.

A special thank you to Ralph who gave a Service that was befitting for our Auntie and all the team at Sellmans, Cannock for their respect and dignity, also to Laurence McGowan who arranged for a Guard of Honour to be present, to Staff at the Heathers Nursing Home for their care, love and respect given to Daisy and to Pat for a lovely Buffet.

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3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

6 Property

Overseas Property

NOTICE TO READERS
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10 Personals

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ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 (AS AMENDED)
ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991
DIVERSION OF VEHICULAR TRAFFIC
LOVE LANE, RUGELEY

NOTICE is hereby given that the Staffordshire County Council on 19 December 2017 made an Order the effect of which will be to prohibit any vehicle from proceeding in that length of Love Lane in Rugeley at a point approximately 20 metres north west of the bridge unless the vehicle is being used in connection with the works; or unless the vehicle requires access to premises on the length of road or is being used for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes. Pedestrian access will be available.

An alternative route for traffic is not available. For more information, visit: https://roadworks.org?tm=192530.

The order will come into operation on 4 January 2018 and the said works will commence on or as near as practicable to that date. It is anticipated that the works will be completed by 8 January 2018.

The Order will remain in force for a period of 18 months, or until the installation of a sewer flow monitor within a chamber and testing of a unit works, which it is proposed to carry out on or near the road have been completed, whichever is the earlier.

John Tradewell, Director for Strategy, Governance & Change, No. 2 Staffordshire Place, Tipping Street, Stafford. ST16 2DH

Ref: 4092154; Enquiries: Customer Contact Centre Tel: 0300 111 8000 www.staffordshire.gov.uk/trafficregulationorders http://roadworks.org

Date: 21 December 2017

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 (AS AMENDED)
ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991
DIVERSION OF VEHICULAR TRAFFIC MOOR LANE, HAMLEY HEATH

NOTICE is hereby given that the Staffordshire County Council on 19 December 2017 made an Order the effect of which will be to prohibit any vehicle from proceeding in that length of Moor Lane in Hamley Heath from the property called Rose Cottage to its junction with Newlands Lane unless the vehicle is being used in connection with the works; or is being used for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes. Pedestrian access will be available. An alternative route for traffic is available via Moor Lane, B5013 Uttoxeter Road, Sherracop Lane, Newlands Lane and vice versa. For more information, visit: https://roadworks.org?tm=103775860. The order will come into operation on 9 January 2018 and the said works will commence on or as near as practicable to that date. It is anticipated that the works will be completed by 15 January 2018. The Order will remain in force for a period of 18 months, or until the gas works, which it is proposed to carry out on or near the road have been completed, whichever is the earlier.

John Tradewell, Director for Strategy, Governance & Change, No. 2 Staffordshire Place, Tipping Street, Stafford. ST16 2DH

Ref: 4094841; Enquiries: Customer Contact Centre Tel: 0300 111 8000 http://roadworks.or www.staffordshire.gov.uk/trafficregulationorders

Date: 21 December 2017

highways england

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14(1)(a) THE M6 MOTORWAY (JUNCTION 12, STAFFORDSHIRE) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2017

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Highways England Company Limited (Company No. 9346363) intends to make an Order on the M6 Motorway, in the County of Staffordshire, to allow bridge inspection works to be carried out.

The effect of the Order will be to close the slip road leading to the northbound carriageway of the M6 at Junction 12.

The work will be carried out over one night between 22:00 hours and 06:00 hours and is expected to start on Tuesday 9 January 2018. The Order will come into force on Friday 5 January 2018.

Vehicles being used for police, fire and rescue authority, ambulance or traffic officer purposes and vehicles being used in connection with the works or for winter maintenance purposes will be exempt from the closure.

A diversion route via M6 Junction 11 will be signed.

For further information please contact Dennis Wheeler on 0300 470 3455.

Karen Eustace, an Officer in Highways England Company Limited.

Highways England Company Limited (Company No. 9346363) registered office: Bridge House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ. A Company registered in England and Wales.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Cannock Chase Council

THE COUNCIL IS TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING PLANNING PROPOSALS

Case Officer – Richard Sunter

Location: Land at Hednesford Town Football Club, Keys Park Road, Hednesford, Cannock, WS12 2DZ

CH/17/236 - Residential Development comprising 119 No. dwellings including 21 No. affordable dwellings, open space and associated roads and parking – Amended Description and amended/ additional plans.

All applications may be inspected electronically at the Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock.

Applications relating to Rugeley and Brereton may also be inspected by paper file at the Rugeley Area Housing Office, Anson Street, Rugeley.

The Council has published a Service Charter for publicity and information about planning applications and a Code of Conduct for the Planning Process both of which are obtainable from Council Offices free of charge.

If you wish to make comments or representations about any of the above proposals you should do so in writing to the Planning Services Manager, Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock, WS11 1BG or by emailing to developmentcontrol@cannockchasedc.gov.uk by **04/01/2018** Please include a daytime telephone number in your reply and quote the appropriate reference when calling or writing.

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Front, from left, Colin Thompson, Peter Holmes and Alan Ryder with fellow winners

Veteran of the Year went to Anna Edwards, aged 67

Kully Dulay, Angela Slater, Natalie Gilliland and Jane Langford from Ladybirds

Volunteer of the Year, 11-year-old Neve Egan

The Special Award of the Year presented to Councillor Mak Singh

Sporting heroes step into the spotlight for awards

WOLVERHAMPTON'S sporting heroes took centre stage at the city's Sports Advisory Council awards night.

The annual event gives recognition to clubs, sportsmen and women as well as the unsung heroes who put in hours of service behind the scenes.

The Sports Advisory Council celebrated its 50th birthday earlier this year and chairman Peter Holmes MBE, who has overseen every awards ceremony since its formation, was delighted to celebrate sport and to acknowledge the unselfish work of countless volunteers.

"It was a pleasant evening and it was lovely to see a group of people who don't normally get acknowledged step into the spotlight," he said.

"I still get a tingle when I see what these wonderful people have contributed to their sport. In many cases it has been anonymous.

"A lot of these people have been ignored in the past, I hope we are highlighting what they do. I hope people appreciate what we try to do and it is purely and simply about the anonymous workers getting their true recognition.

Realise

"What never ceases to amaze me is the fact that we are a sporting city. Sport is in the DNA of every true Wulfrunian, whether they are a performer, a supporter or an official – somewhere in their DNA sport is in there.

"We have 18 centenary clubs in the city and in five years time we will have four more. I wish the council would realise this is in selling Wolverhampton. When people come into Wolverhampton, one of the first things they get into is sport.

"It's the opportunity for them to integrate into life in Wolverhampton. It's so simple, and yet we tend to ignore it. There are no barriers in sport, the only barrier is whether you can afford to take part."

Councillor Steve Evans handed out the 11 awards at Fordhouses Cricket Club. Wolverhampton City of Netball League stalwart Lorraine Shail took the Award of Merit for her years of service as a player, coach and umpire.

The Disabled Athlete of the Year went to Richard Hammond, celebrating his 20th year as a member of Wolverhampton Special Olympics. He has trained with the swimming and gymnastic sections since the age of nine. He won two silver medals in the UK Special Olympic Games held in Sheffield in August to add to the two he won representing Great Britain at World Special Olympic Games in Athens in 2011.

The Coach of the Year accolade was picked up by Steve Peat. Peat was nominated by Wolverhampton Special Olympics after taking on a table tennis coaching role with the group.

He quickly made his mark with Wolverhampton the only group from the West Midlands to claim a gold at the Games in Sheffield earlier this year.

There was further cause for celebration for Wolverhampton Special Olympics after Jacky Silvester was named Volunteer of the Year.

Silvester has been coaching gymnastics and athletics for 32 years and is also head coach of the West Midlands Special Olympics, chair of the Wolverhampton Special Olympics and has coached at seven national summer games.

Wolverhampton City Netball netted another two prizes with Neve Egan scooping the Young Volunteer of the Year award and Anna Edwards the Veteran of the Year. As well as playing for Blaze, 11-year-old Egan is always on hand to help out with coaching and various other duties for her club and within the league.

Edwards stills plays at the age of 67 for Zimmers and has clocked up more than 50 years on court since she started playing netball at Manor Secondary School. She has also turned out for Park Rebels and Sam and is a well-known and popular figure with clubmates and oppositionplayers alike.

Wolverhampton & Bilston Athletics Club were also honoured for reaching their half-century. The club was formed in 1967 when Wolverhampton Harriers and Bilston Athletic Harriers joined forces.

Over the years they have produced some outstanding athletes who have represented the club and their country on the world stage.

Javelin thrower Tessa Sanderson won Olympic gold at Los Angeles in 1984 while Gary and Kath Cook won silver and bronze in their respective 4x400m relay events.

The club has also been granted the Queen's Award for outstanding work in the community and continues to go from strength to strength.

Ladybirds Netball Club were named Team/Club of the Year. They joined the Wolverhampton City Netball League in 1986 under the name of Wood Green High School.

After a few years of action they changed their name to Market Tavern after obtaining a sponsorship deal and have been playing under the Ladybirds guise since 1994.

Their on-court successes include winning the league's Handicap Tournament, Open Knockout and Non-Knockout Cup.

Bollywood

Councillor Mak Singh walked away with the Special Award of the Year. Singh has given outstanding support to the Sports Advisory Council and was a key figure in organising the 50 year celebrations in the summer.

Singh has an impressive sporting background having won numerous powerlifting titles and also spent several years as a stunt double in Bollywood films.

The final two awards were the RV Cook Memorial Trophy and HE Lane Memorial Trophy. The latter went to Alan Ryder, a member of the JW Hunt Cup committee, for services to local football, that has seen him involved at grassroots level as a player and secretary with clubs including Northicote Old Boys, Red Dragons, Wolverhampton Transport, Wednesfield Town and Marstons for more than45 years.

The RV Cook Trophy went to Wolverhampton & Bilston AC's Colin Thompson. He joined the club in 1999 as a runner and moved onto the committee a year later, becoming chairman in in 2004.

SPORTING FEATURE

By Nick Elwell

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Sport

Sporting heroes are recognised at awards

Page 43

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Cannock are stung by top Hornets side

TABLE-TOPPING Telford Hornets put Cannock to the sword as they maintained their perfect record with a 45-0 whitewash.

A dominant second-half display saw Midlands 3 West (North) leaders Hornets pull away for a 10th victory of the campaign.

Hornets suffered an early blow when loose head prop Stuart McClymont was forced off with a knee injury. It took 27 minutes for the deadlock to be broken, Stefan Hildred with a kick wide out on the right from just outside the 22.

As the half was drawing to a close, the hosts grabbed their first try of the afternoon when Lewis Webb collected a misplaced pass and went over in the corner. Hildred's conversion made it 10-0.

Just two minutes into the second half, a five-metre scrum was worked wide to the left for Jordan Jones to go over, with Hildred adding a superb conversion from the touchline. A cheeky quick penalty from five metres out saw captain Peter Jones go over unopposed and Hildred added the extras to make it 24-0.

On 58 minutes Webb sprinted from halfway to go over in the corner for his second try, with another excellent Hildred conversion stretching the lead.

Edwards was yellow carded for a late tackle, but when Cannock also lost a player, the hosts took advantage.

Jones drove over two minutes from time and hooker Steven Monk forced his way over soon after. In the dying seconds centre James Bristow burst through to score, again it was converted by Hildred.

Clubs praying for fair weather after games called off

THERE was frustration for the non-league football sides again as both Hednesford Town and Chasetown saw their games called off.

The Pitmen's scheduled home fixture against Barwell was postponed due to a snow-covered frozen pitch following a 10am inspection at Keys Park.

No new date has yet been arranged for the fixture.

The Pitmen entertain Shaw Lane on Saturday, weather permitting, before making the short trip to Rushall Olympic on Boxing Day and a longer trek to Lancaster on December 30.

There was no luck this time around for Chasetown, whose game the previous week at home to Stamford went ahead thanks to a band of volunteers who helped to clear the snow from the pitch.

Saturday's game at Lincoln United fell foul of the weather.

The Scholars are hoping for better luck this weekend as Kidsgrove visit the Scholars ground.

On Boxing Day, Chasetown travel to Romulus before then journeying to Gresley on December 30.

New team strip? They're lovin' it

Heath Hayes under-10s kitted out

A CANNOCK junior football club has become the 250,000th team to benefit from a new strip courtesy of a fast food chain.

Heath Hayes FC under-10s have received a new strip through the McDonald's and FA Accredited Club Kit Scheme. The scheme is distributing more than 70,000 free kits to grassroots clubs this season and has delivered 250,000 during the four years it has been in operation.

Cannock franchisee David Knight, a keen supporter of grassroots football, said: "Heath Hayes FC is a fantastic example of a grassroots club with a real community spirit. It's important that we support local teams." McDonald's Director of Football, Sir Geoff Hurst, said: "The importance of grassroots football should not be underestimated – especially the hard work that the clubs and volunteers put in each week so that young players can continue to enjoy the game.

"The McDonald's Accredited Kit Scheme is an invaluable resource for these clubs, as it saves them money that can instead be invested into coaching and facilities, as well as reducing the costs passed onto families."

For details on the scheme visit www.mcdonalds.co.uk/kitscheme or follow @BetterPlayUK.

BROTHERS RACE TO THE DOUBLE

A CANNOCK family were toasting a double success in the West Midlands Cyclo-Cross Championships.

Siblings Lewis and Ben Askey both tasted victory in their respective categories in the first staging of the event.

Lewis, 16, took the main prize, holding off Lichfield City rider Toby Barnes to claim the spoils in the senior men's race.

Ben, of RST Racing Team, followed in his brother's footsteps by powering to glory in the final two laps of the under-14s race.

Team Backstedt/Hotchillee rider Lewis was delighted with his victory after edging out fellow junior rider Barnes on the fast Top Barn circuit, near Worcester.

From the outset, the two traded blows as their rivals in behind faded away. With three laps of the nine remaining, Lewis attacked and pulled out an 11-second lead. But, Barnes responded on the final two laps and cut the deficit to five seconds by the finish.

Sprinting

"It was a tough course with a strong wind going straight across and there was no covering with trees on anything," said Lewis.

"It was tough all the way to the finish. I was sprinting all the way to the finish line but it's good for pushing you and making me get better."

Lewis had suffered bad luck in his previous outing in the fourth round of the National Trophy, crashing out while in the leading group to dash his chances of victory.

One of the closest races came in the youth event, with Lichfield City CC trio Daniel Barnes, Emile Alexander and Matthew Kingston grouped together on the fast course.

With two of the five laps remaining, Barnes edged out a gap which grew to seven seconds by the finish ahead of Alexander and Kingston in third.

Lewis Askey crosses the line to win the senior men's race at the West Midlands championships

Ben Askey, centre, of RST Racing, on the under-14s winning podium

Gold medal for Adam, 18, a Shaw thing

A TEENAGE fighter struck gold at the United World Karate championships. Adam Shaw, aged 18, was one of four fighters from EWSKA Burntwood to represent England at the six-day tournament in Montecatini, Italy.

The youngest member of the squad, he brought back a gold medal in the 18-21-years 85+ kg category, adding to two bronze medals he won, for the team discipline and team rotation category in the under-21s heavyweight kumite.

Deradie Harding and Matt Broadhead also won gold. Harding, at 47, the oldest of the quartet, won the ladies' veterans gold medal, while Broadhead, 25, successfully defended the +85kg adults title he won last time in Slovenia two years ago, as well as bringing home a silver in the team rotation.

"Ever since winning in Slovenia I've been working hard ready to defend my title," Broadhead said. "It is hard getting to the top but it is twice as hard staying there because everyone knows you."

Broadhead is also a triple European champion and will look for a fourth title in Malta next year.

Finlay Lewis, 14, reached the quarter-final in his under-14 category in just his second world championships.

Chief instructor Neil Poynton said: "I am so pleased for them all."

The quartet are looking for support and sponsorship. Call Julie on 07794 010839. To join EWSKA, call07393 0400243 or 07969 833592 for details of training sessions.

Young side unlucky in seven-goal thriller

Lichfield City 4 Heath Hayes 3

THIS was again one for the spectator and could quite have been a mirror image of the opening game of the season, which finished in a 5-5 draw.

The game, played on Lichfield's new 4G pitch and so beating the adverse weather, opened in spectacular fashion when Hayes took a first-minute lead though Brad Rolston. After a Lichfield equaliser, Rolston and Jack Weldon made it 3-1 at the interval.

Then in the second half, Lichfield reduced the deficit before restoring parity. The deciding goal in a brilliant game on a cold day came in the 90th minute.

★★★

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Thursday, December 21, 2017

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